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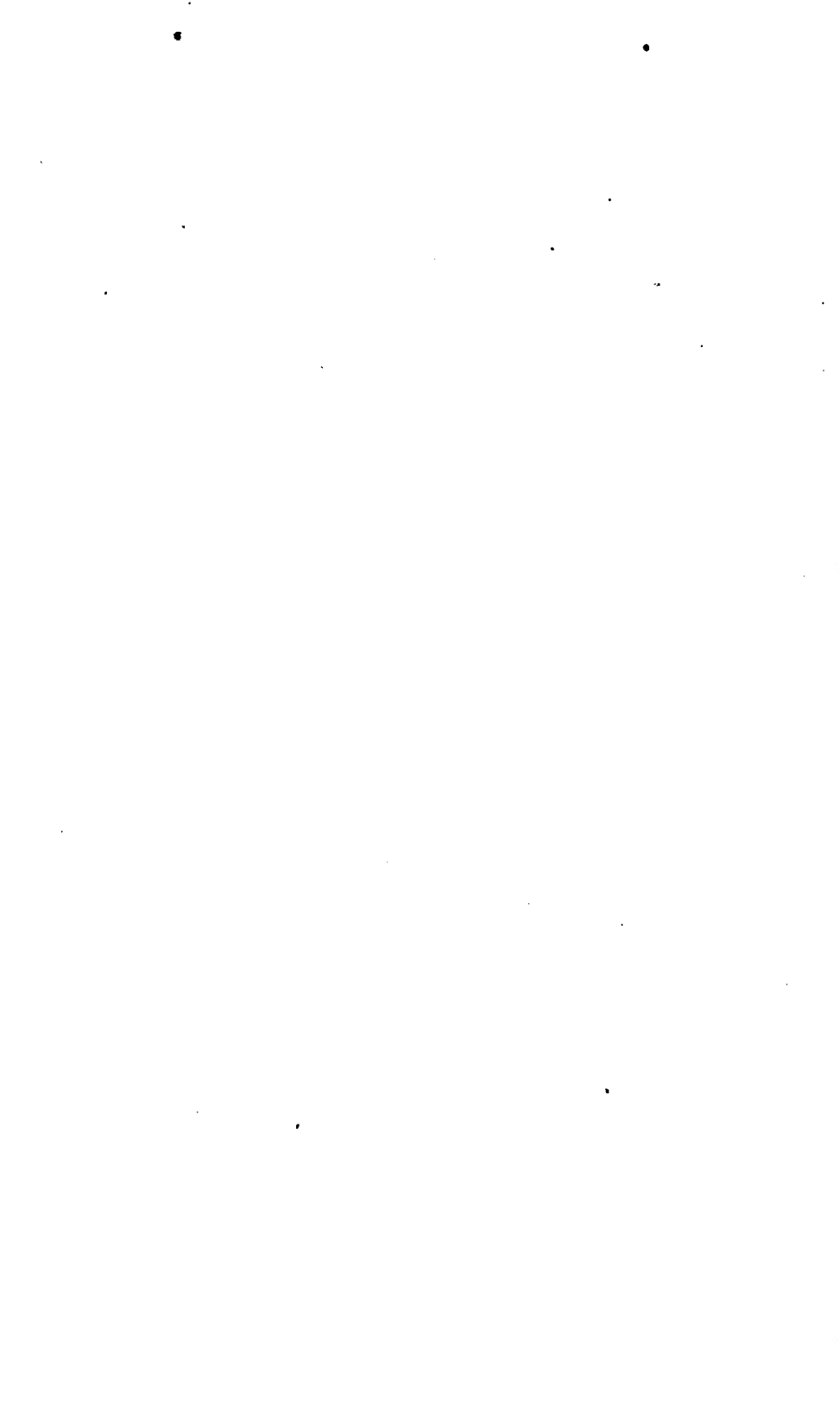


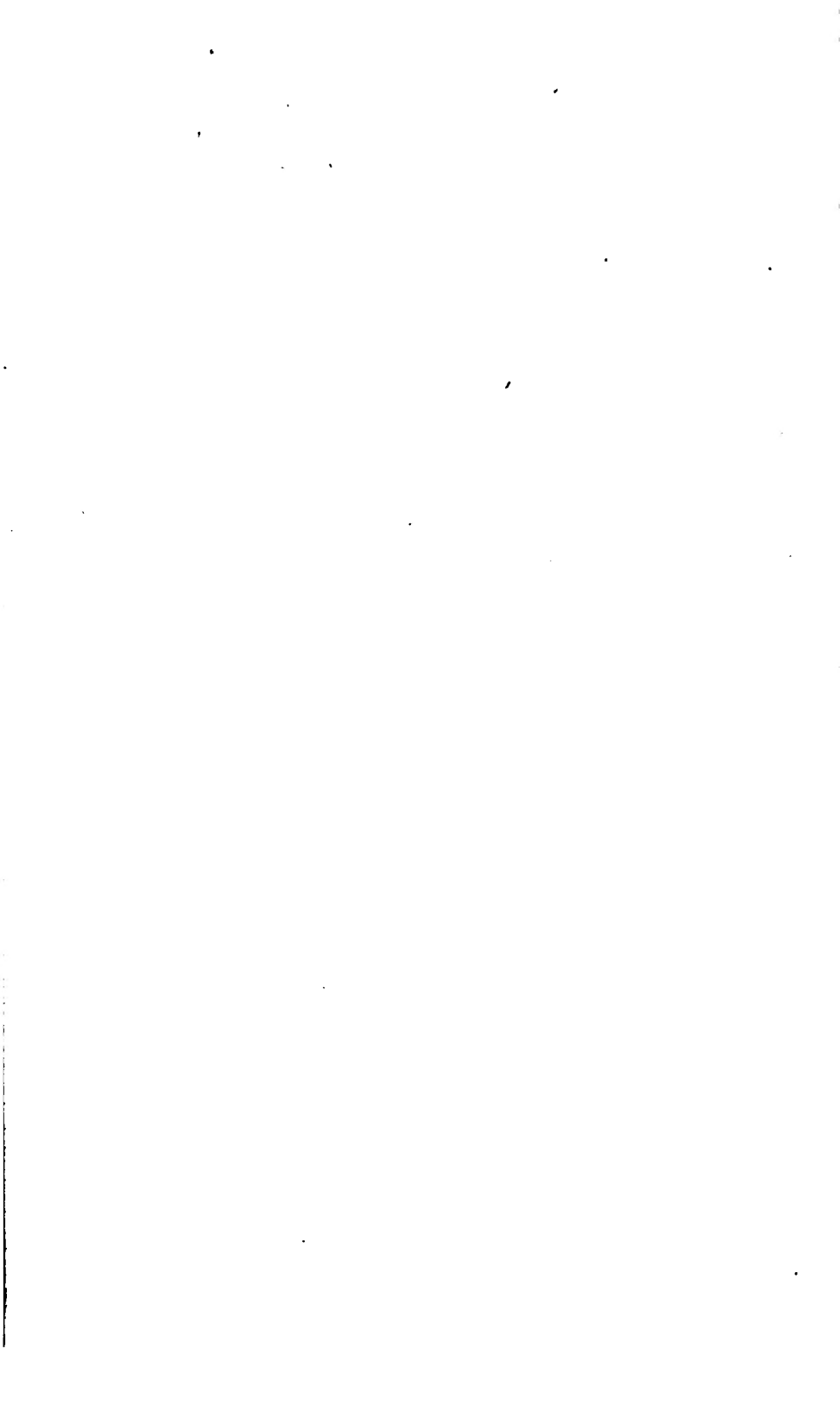


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SELECT
PRACTICAL WRITINGS
OF
RICHARD BAXTER,
WITH A
LIFE OF THE AUTHOR.

BY LEONARD BACON,
PASTOR OF THE FIRST CHURCH IN NEW HAVEN.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOLUME II.

FOURTH EDITION WITH ADDITIONS.

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[The reader of the "Dying Thoughts" may sometimes find himself perplexed, if not lost, among the complicated divisions and subdivisions of the subject,—divisions and subdivisions not always clearly indicated. Some attempt might have been made to mark the progress of meditation and discussion in that work, and to point out the relations of one part to another, and of the several parts to the whole, if the editor had deemed it proper for him to use such liberty with the text of his author. If, however, the reader, in studying that work,—for it is a work to be *studied*,—will occasionally advert to the full *syllabus* exhibited in this Table of Contents, made out by Baxter himself, and not by the editor,—he will find a clew to guide him easily through all its labyrinths.]

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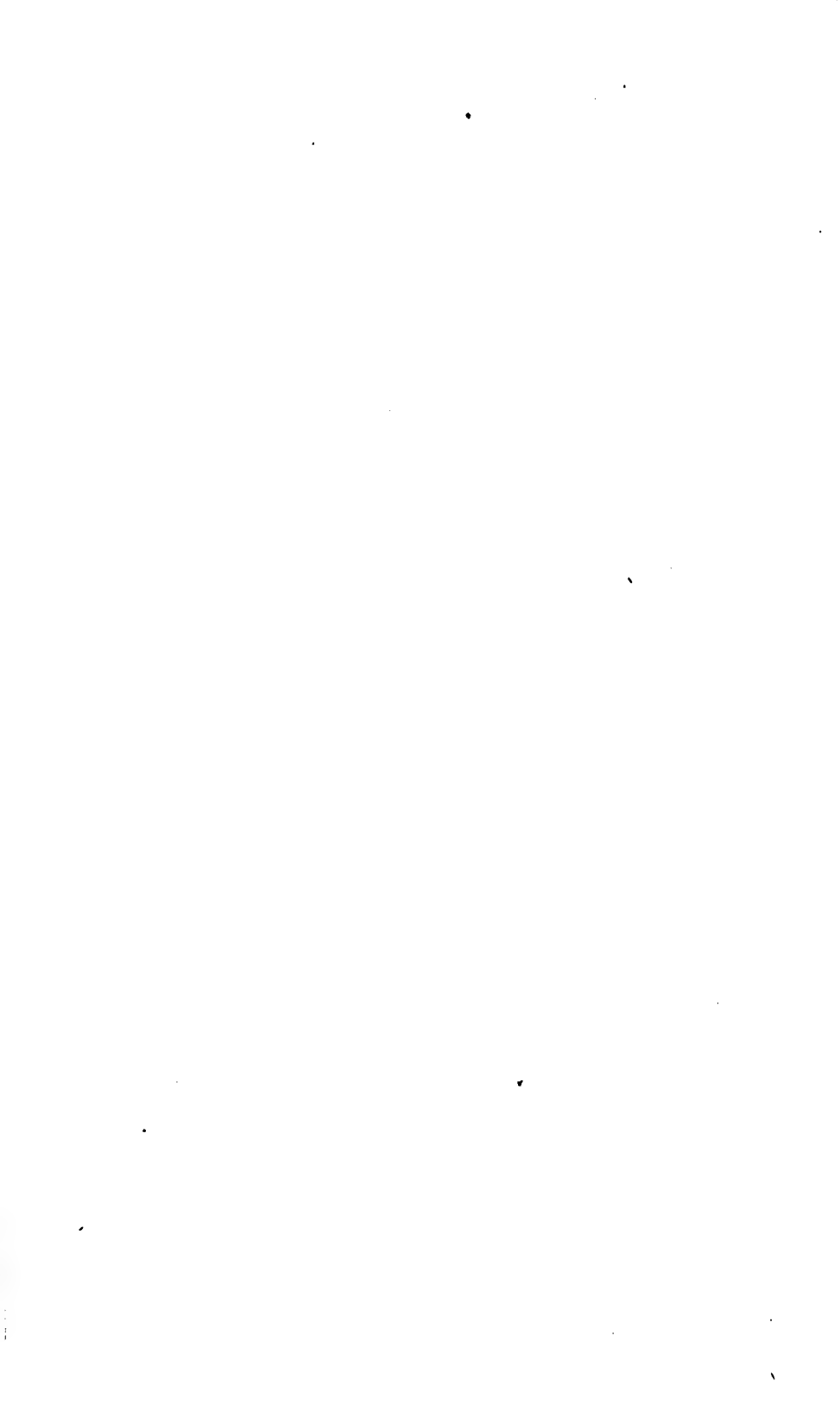
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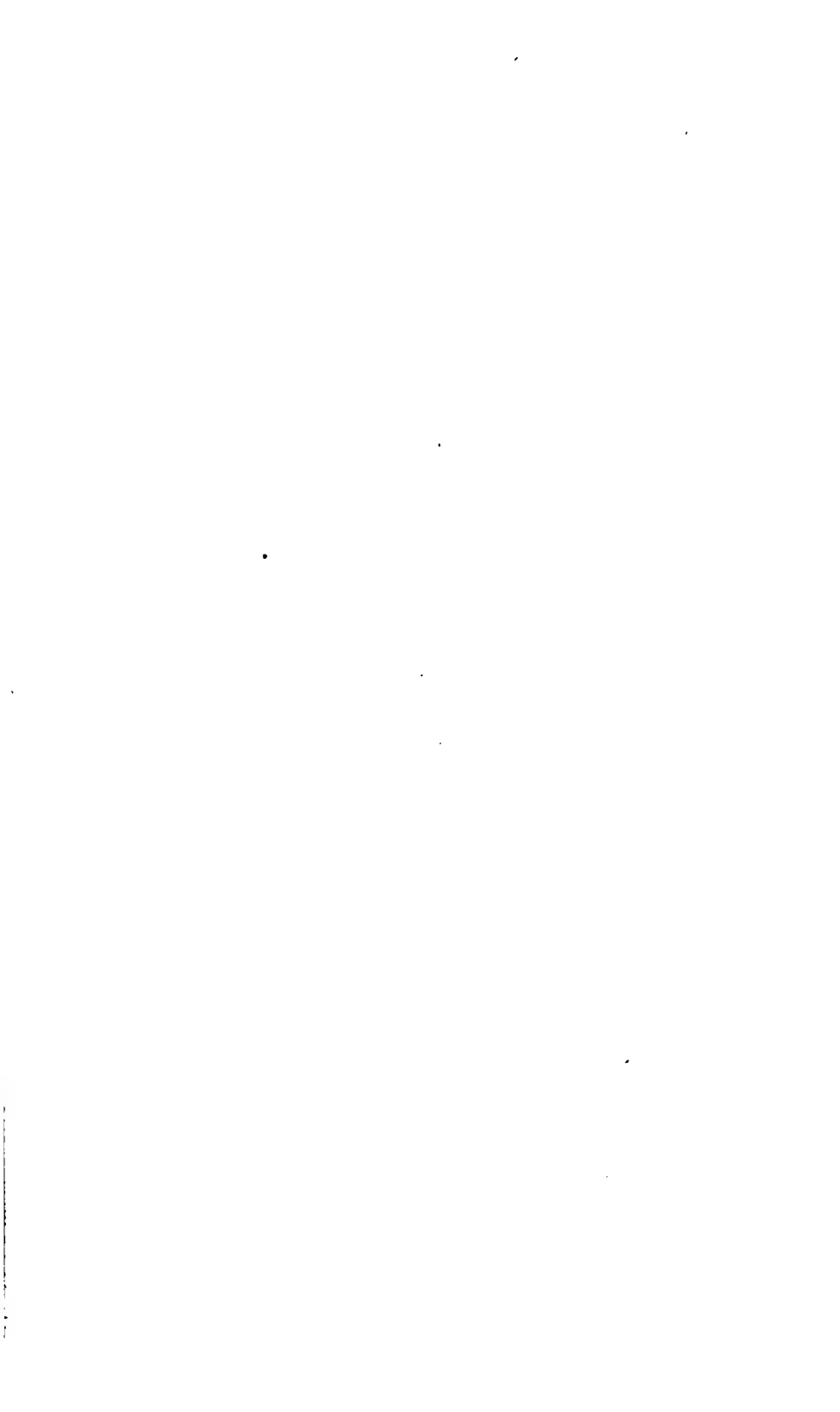
MR. BAXTER'S
DYING THOUGHTS

UPON

PHILIPPIANS I. 23.

WITH AN APPENDIX.

**WRITTEN FOR HIS OWN USE IN THE LATTER TIMES OF HIS
CORPORAL PAINS AND WEAKNESS.**



THE exercise of three sorts of love, to God, to others, and to myself, afford me a threefold satisfaction, conjunct to be willing to depart.

I. I am sure my departure will be the fulfilling of that will which is love itself, which I am bound, above all things, to love and please, and which is the beginning, rule and end of all. Antonine could hence fetch good thoughts of death.

II. The world dieth not with me when I die; nor the church, nor the praise and glory of God, which he will have in and from this world unto the end; and if I love others as myself, their lives and comforts will now be to my thoughts, as if I were to live myself in them. God will be praised and honored by posterity, when I am dead and gone. Were I to be annihilated, this would comfort me now, if I lived and died in perfect love.

III. But a better, glorious world is before me, into which I hope, by death, to be translated, whither all these three sorts of love should wrap up the desires of my ascending soul; even the love of myself, that I may be fully happy; the love of the triumphant church, Christ, angels, and glorified man, and the glory of all the universe, which I shall see; and above all, the love of the most glorious God, infinite life, and light, and love, the ultimate, amiable object of man's love; in whom to be perfectly pleased and delighted, and to whom to be perfectly pleasing forever, is the chief and ultimate end of me, and of the highest, wisest, and best of creatures. Amen.

THE PREFACE TO THE READER.

READER,

I HAVE no other use for a preface to this book, but to give you a true excuse for its publication. I wrote it for myself, unresolved whether any one should ever see it, but at last inclined to leave that to the will of my executors, to publish or suppress it when I am dead, as they saw cause. But my person being seized on, and my library, and all my goods distrained on by constables, and sold, and I constrained to relinquish my house, (for preaching and being in London,) I knew not what to do with multitudes of manuscripts that had long lain by me; having no house to go to, but a narrow hired lodging with strangers: wherefore I cast away whole volumes, which I could not carry away, both controversies and letters practical, and cases of conscience; but having newly lain divers weeks, night and day, in waking torments, nephritic and colic, after other long pains and languor, I took this book with me in my removal, for my own use in my further sickness. Three weeks after, falling into another extreme fit, and expecting death, where I had no friend with me to commit my papers to, merely lest it should be lost, I thought best to give it to the printer. I think it is so much of the work of all men's lives to prepare to die with safety and comfort, that the same thoughts may be needful for others that are so for me. If any mislike the title, as if it imported that the author is dead, let him know that I die daily, and that which quickly will be, almost is: it is suited to my own use: they that it is unsuitable to, may pass it by. If those men's lives were spent in serious, preparing thoughts of death, who are now studying to destroy each other, and tear in pieces a distressed land, they would prevent much dolorous repentance.

RICHARD BAXTER.

THE INTRODUCTION.

PHIL. I. 23.

FOR I AM IN A STRAIT BETWIXT TWO, &c.

I WRITE for myself, and therefore, supposing the sense of the text, shall only observe what is useful to my heart and practice.

It was a happy state into which grace had brought this apostle, who saw so much, not only tolerable, but greatly desirable, both in living and dying. To live, to him, was Christ, that is, Christ's interest or work. To die, would be gain, that is, his own interest and reward. His strait was not whether it would be good to live, or good to depart; both were good; but which was more desirable was the doubt.

1. *Quest.* But was there any doubt to be made between Christ's interest and his own? *Ans.* No, if it had been a full and fixed competition; but by Christ, or Christ's interest, he meaneth his work for his church's interest in this world; but he knew that Christ also had an interest in his saints above, and that he could raise up more to serve him here; yet, because he was to judge by what appeared, and he saw a defect of such on earth, this did turn the scales in his choice; and for the work of Christ and his church's good, he more inclined to the delay of his reward, by self-denial; yet knowing that the delay would tend to its increase. It is useful to me here to note,

That, even in this world, short of death, there is some good so much to be regarded, as may justly prevail with believers to prefer it before the present hastening of their reward.

I the rather note this, that no temptation carry me into that extreme, of taking nothing but heaven to be worthy of our minding or regard, and so to cast off the world in a sinful sort, on pretense of mortification, and a heavenly mind and life.

As to the sense, the meaning is not that any thing on earth is better than heaven, or simply, and in itself, to be preferred before it. The end is better than the means as such, and perfection better than imperfection.

But the present use of the means may be preferred sometimes before the present possession of the end, and the use of means for

a higher end may be preferred before the present possession of a lower end, and every thing hath its season. Planting, and sowing, and building, are not so good as reaping, and fruit-gathering, and dwelling, but in their season, they must be first done.

2. *Quest.* But what is there so desirable in this life?

Ans. I. While it continueth, it is the fulfilling of the will of God, who will have us here; and that is best which God willeth.

II. The life to come dependeth upon this, as the life of man in the world upon his generation in the womb; or as the reward upon the work; or the runner's or soldier's prize upon his race or fighting; or as the merchant's gain upon his voyage. Heaven is won or lost on earth. The possession is there, but the preparation is here. Christ will judge all men according to their works on earth. "Well done, good and faithful servant," must go before "Enter thou into the joy of thy Lord." "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course," goeth before "the crown of righteousness which God, the righteous Judge, will give." All that ever must be done for salvation by us, must here be done. It was on earth that Christ himself wrought the work of our redemption, fulfilled all righteousness, became our ransom, and paid the price of our salvation; and it is here that our part is to be done.

And the bestowing of the reward is God's work, who, we are sure, will never fail. There is no place for the least suspicion or fear of his misdoing, or failing, in any of his undertaken work. But the danger and fear is of our own miscarrying, lest we be not found capable of receiving what God will certainly give to all that are disposed receivers. To distrust God is heinous sin and folly; but to distrust ourselves we have great cause. So that if we will make sure of heaven, it must be by giving all diligence to make firm our title, our calling, and our election, here on earth. If we fear hell, we must fear being prepared for it.

And it is great and difficult work that must be here done. It is here that we must be cured of all damning sin; that we must be regenerate and new born; that we must be pardoned and justified by faith. It is here that we must be united to Christ, made wise to salvation, renewed by his Spirit, and conformed to his likeness. It is here that we must overcome all the temptations of the devil, the world, and the flesh, and perform all the duties towards God and man, that must be rewarded. It is here that Christ must be believed in with the heart to righteousness, and with the mouth confessed to salvation. It is here that we must suffer with him, that we may reign with him, and be faithful to the death, that we may receive the crown of life. Here we must so run that we may obtain.

III. Yea, we have greater work here to do than mere securing

our own salvation. We are members of the world and church, and we must labor to do good to man. We are trusted with our Master's talents for his service, in our places to do our best to propagate his truth, and grace, and church; and to bring home souls, and honor his cause, and edify his flock, and further the salvation of as many as we can. All this is to be done on earth, if we will secure the end of all in heaven.

Use 1. It is, then, an error (though it is but few, I think, that are guilty of it) to think, that all religion lieth in minding only the life to come, and disregarding all things in this present life: all true Christians must seriously mind both the end and the means, or way. If they mind not, believingly, the end, they will never be faithful in the use of means. If they mind not, and use not diligently, the means, they will never obtain the end. None can use earth well that prefer not heaven, and none come to heaven, at age, that are not prepared by well using earth. Heaven must have the deepest esteem, and habitual love, and desire, and joy; but earth must have more of our daily thoughts for present practice. A man that travelleth to the most desirable home, hath a habit of desire to it all the way, but his present business is his travel; and horse, and company, and inns, and ways, and weariness, &c., may take up more of his sensible thoughts, and of his talk, and action, than his home.

Use 2. I have oft marveled to find David, in the Psalms, and other saints, before Christ's coming, to have expressed so great a sense of the things of this present life, and to have said so little of another; to have made so great a matter of prosperity, dominions, and victories, on one hand, and of enemies, success, and persecution, on the other. But I consider that it was not for mere personal, carnal interest, but for the church of God, and for his honor, word, and worship. And they knew that if things go well with us on earth, they will be sure to go well in heaven. If the militant church prosper in holiness, there is no doubt but it will triumph in glory. God will be sure to do his part in receiving souls, if they be here prepared for his receipt. And Satan doth much of his damning work by men: if we escape their temptations, we escape much of our danger. If idolaters prospered, Israel was tempted to idolatry. The Greek church is almost swallowed up by Turkish prosperity and dominion. Most follow the powerful and prosperous side. And, therefore, for God's cause, and for heavenly, everlasting interest, our own state, but much more the church's, must be greatly regarded here on earth.

Indeed, if earth be desired only for earth, and prosperity loved but for the present welfare of the flesh, it is the certain mark of damning carnality, and an earthly mind. But to desire peace, and

prosperity, and power, to be in the hands of wise and faithful men, for the sake of souls, and the increase of the church, and the honor of God, that his name may be hallowed, his kingdom come, and his will done on earth, as it is in heaven; this is to be the chief of our prayers to God.

Use 3. Be not unthankful, then, O my soul, for the mercies of this present life, for those to thy body, to thy friends, to the land of thy nativity, and especially to the church of God.

1. This body is so nearly united to thee, that it must needs be a great help or hindrance. Had it been more afflicted, it might have been a discouraging clog; like a tired horse in a journey, or an ill tool to a workman, or an untuned instrument in music. A sick or bad servant in a house is a great trouble, and a bad wife much more; but thy body is nearer thee than either, and will be more of thy concern.

And yet if it had been more strong and healthful, sense and appetite would have been strong, and lust would have been strong, and therefore danger would have been greater, and victory and salvation much more difficult. Even weak senses and temptations have too oft prevailed. How knowest thou, then, what stronger might have done? When I see a thirsty man in a fever or dropsy, and especially when I see strong and healthful youths, bred up in fullness, and among temptations, how mad they are in sin, and how violently they are carried to it, bearing down God's rebukes, and conscience, and parents; and friends, and all regard to their salvation, it tells me how great a mercy I had even in a body not liable to their case.

And many a bodily deliverance hath been of great use to my soul, renewing my time, and opportunity, and strength, for service, and bringing frequent and fresh reports of the love of God.

If bodily mercies were not of great use to the soul, Christ would not so much have showed his saving love, by healing all manner of diseases, as he did. Nor would God promise us a resurrection of the body, if a congruous body did not further the welfare of the soul.

2. And I am obliged to great thankfulness to God for the mercies of this life which he hath showed to my friends; that which furthurs their joy should increase mine. I ought to rejoice with them that rejoice. Nature and grace teach us to be glad when our friends are well, and prosper, though all in order to better things than bodily welfare.

3. And such mercies of this life to the land of our habitation must not be undervalued. The want of them are parts of God's threatened curse; and godliness hath the promise of this life, and of that which is to come, and so is profitable to all things. And

when God sends on a land the plagues of famine, pestilence, war, persecution, especially a famine of the word of God, it is a great sin to be insensible of it. If any shall say, 'While heaven is sure, we have no cause to accuse God, or to cast away comfort, hope, or duty,' they say well; but if they say, 'Because heaven is all, we must make light of all that befallerth us on earth,' they say amiss.

Good princes, magistrates, and public spirited men, that promote the safety, peace, and true prosperity of the commonwealth, do hereby very much befriend religion, and men's salvation, and are greatly to be loved and honored by all. If the civil state, called the commonwealth, do miscarry, or fall into ruin and calamity, the church will fare the worse for it, as the soul doth by the ruins of the body. The Turkish, Muscovite, and such other empires, tell us how the church consumeth, and dwindles away into contempt, or withered ceremony and formality, where tyranny brings slavery, beggary, or long persecution on the subjects. Doubtless, divers passages in the Revelations contain the church's glorifying of God, for their power and prosperity on earth, when emperors became Christians: what else can be meant well by Rev. v. 10. "Hath made us kings and priests to God, and we shall reign on the earth;" but that Christians shall be brought from under heathen persecution, and have rule and sacred honor in the world, some of them being princes; some honored church guides; and all a peculiar, honored people. And had not Satan found out that cursed way of getting wicked men, that hate true godliness and peace, into the sacred places of princes and pastors, to do his work against Christ, as in Christ's name, surely no good Christians would have grudged at the power of rulers of state or church. Sure I am, that many, called Fifth Monarchy men, seem to make this their great hope, that rule shall be in the hands of righteous men; and I think most religious parties would rejoice if those had very great power, whom they take to be the best and truest men; which shows that it is not the greatness of power in most princes, or sound bishops, that they dislike, but the badness, real or supposed, of those whose power they dislike. Who will blame power to do good?

Sure the three first and great petitions of the Lord's prayer include some temporal welfare of the world and church, without which the spiritual rarely prospereth extensively, (though intensively in a few it may,) since miracles ceased.

4. Be thankful, therefore, for all the church's mercies here on earth; for all the protection of magistracy; the plenty of preachers; the preservation from enemies; the restraint of persecution; the concord of Christians; and increase of godliness; which, in this

land, it hath had in our ages ; notwithstanding all Satan's malignant rage, and all the bloody wars that have interrupted our tranquillity. How many Psalms of joyful thanksgiving be there for Israel's deliverances, and the preservation of Zion, and God's worship in his sanctuary ! Pray for the peace of Jerusalem : they shall prosper that love it. Especially that the gospel is continued, while so many rage against it, is a mercy not to be made light of.

Use 4. Be especially thankful, O my soul, that God hath made any use of thee for the service of his church on earth. My God, my soul for this doth magnify thee, and my spirit rejoiceth in the review of thy great undeserved mercy ! Oh ! what am I, whom thou tookest up from the dunghill or low obscurity, that I should live, myself, in the constant relish of thy sweet and sacred truth, and with such encouraging success communicate it to others ! That I must say, now my public work seems ended, that these forty-three or forty-four years, I have no reason to think that ever I labored in vain ! O, with what gratitude must I look upon all places where I lived and labored ; but, above all, that place that had my strength. I bless thee for the great numbers gone to heaven, and for the continuance of piety, humility, concord, and peace among them.

And for all that by my writings have received any saving light and grace. O my God ! let not my own heart be barren while I labor in thy husbandry, to bring others unto holy fruit. Let me not be a stranger to the life and power of that saving truth which I have done so much to communicate to others. O, let not my own words and writings condemn me, as void of that divine and heavenly nature and life which I have said so much for to the world.

Use 5. Stir up, then, O my soul, thy sincere desires, and all thy faculties, to do the remnant of the work of Christ appointed thee on earth, and then joyfully wait for the heavenly perfection in God's own time.

Thou canst truly say, "To live, to me, is Christ." It is his work for which thou livest : thou hast no other business in the world ; but thou dost his work with the mixture of many oversights and imperfections, and too much troublest thy thoughts distrustfully about God's part, who never faileth. If thy work be done, be thankful for what is past, and that thou art come so near the port of rest : if God will add any more to thy days, serve him with double alacrity, now thou art so near the end : the prize is almost within sight : time is swift and short. Thou hast told others that there is no working in the grave, and that it must be now or never. Though the conceit of meriting of commutative justice be no better than madness, dream not that God will save the wicked, no, nor equally reward the slothful and the diligent, because Christ's

righteousness was perfect. Paternal justice maketh difference according to that worthiness which is so denominated by the law of grace. And as sin is its own punishment, holiness and obedience is much of its own reward. Whatever God appointeth thee to do, see that thou do it sincerely, and with all thy might. If sin dispose men to be angry because it is detected, disgraced, and resisted, if God be pleased, their wrath should be patiently borne, who will shortly be far more angry with themselves. If slander and obloquy survive, so will the better effects on those that are converted; and there is no comparison between these. I shall not be hurt, when I am with Christ, by the calumnies of men on earth; but the saving benefit will, by converted sinners, be enjoyed everlastingly. Words and actions are transient things, and, being once past, are nothing; but the effects of them, on an immortal soul, may be endless. All the sermons that I have preached are nothing now; but the grace of God, on sanctified souls, is the beginning of eternal life. It is unspeakable mercy to be sincerely thus employed with success; therefore, I had reason, all this while, to be in Paul's strait, and make no haste in my desires to depart. The crown will come in its due time; and eternity is long enough to enjoy it, how long soever it be delayed: but if I will do that which must obtain it for myself and others, it must be quickly done, before my declining sun be set.

O that I had no worse causes of my unwillingness yet to die, than my desire to do the work of life for my own and other men's salvation, and to finish my course with joy, and the ministry committed to me by the Lord.

Use 6. And as it is on earth that I must do good to others, so it must be in a manner suited to their state on earth. Souls are here closely united to bodies, by which they must receive much good or hurt: do good to men's bodies, if thou wouldest do good to their souls: say not, things corporeal are worthless trifles, for which the receivers will be never the better; they are things that nature is easily sensible of; and sense is the passage to the mind and will. Dost not thou find what a help it is to thyself to have, at any time, any ease and alacrity of body? And what a burden and hindrance pains and cares are? Labor, then, to free others from such burdens and temptations, and be not regardless of them. If thou must rejoice with them that rejoice, and mourn with them that mourn, further thy own joy in furthering theirs, and avoid thy own sorrows in avoiding or curing theirs.

But, alas! what power hath selfishness in most! How easily do we bear our brethren's pains, reproaches, wants, and afflictions, in comparison of our own! how few thoughts, and how little cost or labor, do we use for their supply, in comparison of what we do for

ourselves! Nature, indeed, teacheth us to be most sensible of our own case; but grace tells us, that we should not make so great a difference as we do, but should love our neighbors as ourselves.

Use 7. And now, O my soul, consider how mercifully God hath dealt with thee, that thy strait should be between two conditions so desirable. I shall either die speedily, or stay yet longer upon earth; whichever it be, it will be a merciful and comfortable state; that it is desirable to depart and be with Christ, I must not doubt, and shall anon more copiously consider. And if my abode on earth yet longer be so great a mercy as to be put in the balance against my present possession of heaven, surely it must be a state which obligeth me to great thankfulness to God, and comfortable acknowledgment; and surely it is not my pain, or sickness, my sufferings from malicious men, that should make this life on earth unacceptable, while God will continue it. Paul had his prick or thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet him, and suffered more from men (though less in his health) than I have done; and yet he gloried in such infirmities, and rejoiced in his tribulations, and was in a strait between living and dying; yea, rather chose to live yet longer.

Alas! it is another kind of strait that most of the world are in. The strait of most is between the desire of life for fleshly interest, and the fear of death, as ending their felicity. The strait of many is, between a tiring world and body, which maketh them weary of living, and the dreadful prospect of future danger, which makes them afraid of dying: if they live, it is in misery; if they must die, they are afraid of greater misery. Which way ever they look, behind or before them, to this world or the next, fear and trouble is their lot. Yea, many an upright Christian, through the weakness of his trust in God, doth live in this perplexed strait; weary of living, and afraid of dying; between grief and fear, they are pressed continually. But Paul's strait was between two joys; which of them he should desire most; and if that be my case, what should much interrupt my peace or pleasure? If I live, it is for Christ; for his work, and for his church; for preparation for my own and others' everlasting felicity: and should any suffering, which maketh me not unserviceable, make me impatient with such a work and such a life? If I die presently, it is my gain; God, who appointeth me my work, doth limit my time; and sure his glorious reward can never be unseasonable, or come too soon, if it be the time that he appointeth. When I first engaged myself to preach the gospel, I reckoned (as probable) but upon one or two years; and God hath continued me yet above forty-four; (with such interruptions as others in these times have had;) and what reason have I now to be unwilling, either to live or die? God's

service hath been so sweet to me, that it hath overcome the trouble of constant pains, or weakness of the flesh, and all that men have said or done against me.

But the following crown exceeds this pleasure, more than I am here capable to conceive. There is some trouble in all this pleasant work, from which the soul and flesh would rest; and blessed are the dead, that die in the Lord; even so saith the Spirit; for they rest from their labors, and their works follow them.

But, O my soul, what needest thou be troubled in this kind of strait? It is not left to thee to choose whether or when thou wilt live or die. It is God that will determine it, who is infinitely fitter to choose than thou. Leave, therefore, his own work to himself, and mind that which is thine: whilst thou livest, live to Christ; and when thou diest, thou shalt die to Christ; even into his blessed hands: so live that thou mayest say, "It is Christ liveth in me, and the life that I live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me;" and then, as thou hast lived in the comfort of hope, thou shalt die unto the comfort of vision and fruition. And when thou canst say, "He is the God whose I am, and whom I serve," thou mayest boldly add, 'and whom I trust, and to whom I commend my departing soul; and I know whom I have trusted.'

MR. BAXTER'S

DYING THOUGHTS.

PHIL. i. 23.

**FOR I AM IN A STRAIT BETWIXT TWO, HAVING A DESIRE TO DEPART,
AND TO BE WITH CHRIST, WHICH IS FAR BETTER. (Or, FOR THIS
IS MUCH RATHER TO BE PREFERRED, OR BETTER.)**

“MAN that is born of a woman is of few days, and full of trouble. He cometh forth like a flower, and is cut down: he fleeth also as a shadow, and continueth not. And dost thou open thine eyes upon such a one, and bringest me into judgment with thee?” saith Job, xiv. 1—3. As a watch when it is wound up, or as a candle newly lighted, so man, newly conceived or born, beginneth a motion, which incessantly hasteth to its appointed period. And an action, and its time that is past, is nothing; so vain a thing would man be, and so vain his life, were it not for the hopes of a more durable life, which this referreth to. But those hopes, and the means, do not only difference a believer from an infidel, but a man from a beast. When Solomon describeth the difference, in respect to the time and things of this life only, he truly tells us, that one end here befalling both, doth show that both are here but vanity, but man’s vexation is greater than the beasts’. And Paul truly saith of Christians, that if our hope were only in this life, (that is, in the time and things of this life and world,) we were, of all men, the most miserable. Though even in this life, as related to a better, and as we are exercised about things of a higher nature than the concerns of temporal life, we are far happier than any worldlings.

Being to speak to myself, I shall pass by all the rest of the matter of this text, and suppose its due explication, and spread before my soul only the doctrine and uses of these two propositions contained in it. **FIRST**, That the souls of believers, when departed hence, shall be with Christ. **SECONDLY**, That so to be with Christ is far better for them than to be here in the body.

THE SOULS OF BELIEVERS, WHEN DEPARTED HENCE, SHALL BE
WITH CHRIST.

Concerning the **FIRST**, my thoughts shall keep this order. *I.* I shall consider the necessity of believing it. *II.* Whether it be best believing it, without consideration of the proofs or difficulties. *III.* The certainty of it manifested for the exercise of faith.

I. Whether the words signify that we shall be in the same place with Christ, (which Grotius groundlessly denieth,) or only in his hand, and care, and love, I will not stay to dispute. Many other texts, concurring, do assure us that "we shall be with him where he is;" John xii. 26, and xvii. 24, &c. At least, "with him," can mean no less than a state of communion, and a participation of felicity. And to believe such a state of happiness for departed souls, is of manifold necessity or use.

I. If this be not soundly believed, a man must live besides, or below, the end of life. He must have a false end, or be uncertain what should be his end.

I know it may be objected, that if I make it my end to please God, by obeying him, and doing all the good I can, and trust him with my soul, and future estate, as one that is utterly uncertain what he will do with me, I have an end intended, which will make me godly, charitable, and just, and happy, so far as I am made for happiness; for the pleasing of God is the right end of all.

But, 1. Must I desire to please him no better than I do in this imperfect state, in which I have and do so much which is displeasing to him? He that must desire to please him, must desire to please him perfectly; and our desire of our ultimate end must have no bounds, or check. Am I capable of pleasing God no better than by such a sinful life as this?

2. God hath made the desire of our own felicity so necessary to the soul of man, that it cannot be expected that our desire to please him should be separated from this.

3. Therefore, both in respect of God, as the end, and of our felicity, as our second end, we must believe that he is the beatifying rewarder of them that diligently seek him.

For, 1. If we make such an ill description of God, as that he will turn our pleasing him to our loss, or will not turn it to our gain and welfare, or that we know not whether he will do so or not, it will hinder our love, and trust, and joy, in him, by which we must please him, and, consequently, hinder the alacrity, and soundness, and constancy, of our obedience.

2. And it will much dismiss that self-love, which must excite us; and it will take off part of our necessary end. And I think the objectors would confess, that if they have no certainty what God

will do with them, they must have some probability and hope, before they can be sincerely devoted here to please him.

And, 1. If a man be but uncertain what he should make the end of his life, or what he should live for, how can he pitch upon an uncertain end? And if he waver so as to have no end, he can use no means; and if end and means be all laid by, the man liveth not as a man but as a brute: and what a torment must it be to a considering mind to be uncertain what to intend and do in all the tenor and actions of his life! Like a man going out at his door, not knowing whither or what to do, or which way to go; either he will stand still, or move as brutes do, by present sense, or as a wind-mill, or weathercock, as he is moved.

2. But if he pitch upon a wrong end, it may yet be worse than none; for he will but do hurt, or make work for repentance: and all the actions of his life must be formally wrong, how good soever materially, if the end of them be wrong.

II. And if I fetch them not from this end, and believe not in God as a rewarder of his servants, in a better life, what motives shall I have, which in our present difficulties, will be sufficient to cause me to live a holy, yea, or a truly honest life? All piety and honesty, indeed, is good, and goodness is desirable for itself; but the goodness of a means is its aptitude for the end; and we have here abundance of impediments, competitors, diversions, and temptations, and difficulties of many sorts; and all these must be overcome by him that will live in piety or honesty; and our natures, we find, are diseased, and greatly indisposed to unquestionable duties; and will they ever discharge them, and conquer all these difficulties and temptations, if the necessary motive be not believed? Duty to God and man is accidentally hard and costly to the flesh, though amiable in itself. It may cost us our estates, our liberties, our lives. The world is not so happy as commonly to know good men from bad, or to encourage piety and virtue, or to forbear opposing them. And who will let go his present welfare, without some hope of better, as a reward? Men use not to serve God for nought; nor that think it will be their loss to serve him.

A life of *sin* will not be avoided upon *lower* ends and motives: nay, those lower ends, when alone, will be a constant sin themselves. A preferring vanity to glory, the creature to God, and a setting our heart on that which will never make us happy: and when lust and appetite incline men, strongly and constantly, to their several objects, what shall sufficiently restrain them, except the greater and more durable delights or motives fetched from preponderating things? Lust and appetite distinguish not between lawful and unlawful. We may see in the brutish politics of Ben-

edictus Spinoza, in his Tractat. Theolog. Polit., whither the principles of infidelity tend. If sin so overspread the earth, that the whole world is as drowned in wickedness, notwithstanding all the hopes and fears of a life to come, what would it do were there no such hopes and fears?

III. And no mercy can be truly known and estimated, nor rightly used and improved, by him that seeth not its tendency to the end, and perceiveth not that it leadeth to a better life, and useth it not thereunto. God dealeth more bountifully with us than worldlings understand. He giveth us all the mercies of this life, as helps to an immortal state of glory, and as earnest of it. Sensualists know not what a soul is, nor what soul mercies are; and, therefore, not what the soul of all bodily mercies are, but take up only with the carcass, shell, or shadow. If the king would give me a lordship, and send me a horse or coach to carry me to it, and I should only ride about the fields for my pleasure, and make no other use of it, should I not undervalue and lose the principal benefit of my horse or coach? No wonder if unbelievers be unthankful, when they know not at all that part of God's mercies which is the life and real excellency of them.

IV. And, alas! how should I bear with comfort the sufferings of this wretched life, without the hopes of a life with Christ? What should support and comfort me under my bodily languishings and pains, my weary hours, and my daily experience of the vanity and vexation of all things under the sun, had I not a prospect of a comfortable end of all? I, that have lived in the midst of great and precious mercies, have all my life had something to do to overcome the temptation of wishing that I had never been born, and had never overcome it but by the belief of a blessed life hereafter. Solomon's sense of vanity and vexation hath long made all the business, and wealth, and honor, and pleasure, of this world, as such, appear such a dream and shadow to me, that were it not for the end, I could not have much differenced men's sleeping and their waking thoughts, nor have much more have valued the waking than the sleeping part of life, but should have thought it a kind of happiness to have slept from the birth unto the death. Children cry when they come into the world; and I am often sorry when I am awakened out of a quiet sleep, especially to the business of an unquiet day. We should be strongly tempted, in our considering state, to murmur at our Creator, as dealing much harder by us than by the brutes, if we must have had all those cares, and griefs, and fears, by the knowledge of what we want, and the prospect of death, and future evils, which they are exempted from, and had not, withal, had the hopes of a future felicity to support us. Seneca and his stoics had no better argument to silence such

murmurers who believed not a better life, than to tell them, that if this life had more evil than good, and they thought God did them wrong, they might remedy themselves by ending it when they would. But that would not cure the repinings of a nature which found itself necessarily weary of the miseries of life, and yet afraid of dying. And it is no great wonder that many thought that pre-existent souls were put into these bodies as a punishment of something done in a former life, while they foresaw not the hoped end of all our fears and sorrows. 'O, how contemptible a thing is man!' saith the same Seneca; 'unless he lift up himself above human things.' Therefore, saith Solomon, when he had glutted himself with all temporal pleasures, "I hated life, because the work that is wrought under the sun is grievous to me; for all is vanity and vexation of spirit;" Eccles. ii. 17.

II. I have often thought whether an implicit belief of a future happiness, without any search into its nature, and thinking of any thing that can be said against it, or the searching, trying way, be better. On the one side, I have known many godly women that never disputed the matter, but served God, comfortably, to a very old age, (between eighty and one hundred,) to have lived many years in a cheerful readiness and desire of death, and such as few learned, studious men do ever attain to in that degree, who, no doubt, had this as a divine reward of their long and faithful service of God, and trusting in him. On the other side, a studious man can hardly keep off all objections, or secure his mind against the suggestions of difficulties and doubts; and if they come in, they must be answered, seeing we give them half a victory if we cast them off before we can answer them. And a faith that is not upheld by such evidence of truth as reason can discern and justify, is oft joined with much secret doubting, which men dare not open, but do not, therefore, overcome; and its weakness may have a weakening deficiency, as to all the graces and duties which should be strengthened by it. And who knoweth how soon a temptation from Satan, or infidels, or our own dark hearts, may assault us, which will not, without such evidence and resolving light, be overcome? And yet many that try, and reason, and dispute most, have not the strongest or most powerful faith.

And my thoughts of this have had this issue. 1. There is a great difference between that light which sheweth us the thing itself, and that artificial skill by which we have right notions, names, definitions, and formed arguments, and answers to objections. This artificial, logical, organical kind of knowledge is good and useful in its kind, if right; like speech itself: but he that hath much of this, may have little of the former; and unlearned persons that have little of this, may have more of the former, and may have

those inward perceptions of the verity of the promises and rewards of God, which they cannot bring forth into artificial reasonings to themselves or others; who are taught of God, by the effective sort of teaching which reacheth the heart, or will, as well as the understanding, and is a giving of what is taught, and a making us such as we are told we must be.* And who findeth not need to pray hard for this effective teaching of God, when he hath got all organical knowledge, and words and arguments in themselves most apt, at his fingers' ends, as we say? When I can prove the truth of the word of God, and the life to come, with the most convincing, undeniable reasons, I feel need to cry and pray daily to God, to increase my faith, and to give me that light which may satisfy the soul, and reach the end.

2. Yet man, being a rational wight, is not taught by mere instinct and inspiration, and therefore this effective teaching of God doth ordinarily suppose a rational, objective, organical teaching and knowledge. And the aforesaid unlearned Christians are convinced, by good evidence, that God's word is true, and his rewards are sure, though they have but a confused conception of this evidence, and cannot word it, nor reduce it to fit notions. And to drive these that have fundamental evidence, unseasonably and hastily to dispute their faith, and so to puzzle them by words and artificial objections, is but to hurt them, by setting the artificial, organical, lower part, which is the body of knowledge, against the real light and perception of the thing, (which is as the soul,) even as carnal men set the creatures against God, that should lead us to God, so do they by logical, artificial knowledge.

But they that are prepared for such disputes, and furnished with all artificial helps, may make good use of them for defending and clearing up the truth to themselves and others, so be it they use them as a means to the due end, and in a right manner, and set them not up against, or instead of, the real and effective light.

But the revealed and necessary part must here be distinguished from the unrevealed and unnecessary. To study till we, as clearly as may be, understand the certainty of a future happiness, and wherein it consisteth, (in the sight of God's glory, and in perfect, holy, mutual love, in union with Christ, and all the blessed,) this is of great use to our holiness and peace. But when we will know more than God would have us, it doth but tend (as gazing on the sun) to make us blind, and to doubt of certainties, because we cannot be resolved of uncertainties. To trouble our heads too much in thinking how souls, out of the body, do subsist and act,

* This is the true mean between George Keith the Quaker's doctrine of continued inspiration and intuition; and that on the other extreme,

sensitively or not, by organs or without; how far they are one, and how far still individuate; in what place they shall remain, and where is their paradise or heaven; how shall they be again united to the body, whether by their own emission, as the sunbeams touch their objects here, and whether the body shall be restored, as the consumed flesh of restored sick men, *aliunde*, or only from the old materials. A hundred of these questions are better left to the knowledge of Christ, lest we do but foolishly make snares for ourselves. Had all these been needful to us, they had been revealed. In respect to all such curiosities, and needless knowledge, it is a believer's wisdom implicitly to trust his soul to Christ, and to be satisfied that he knoweth what we know not, and to fear that vain, vexatious knowledge, or inquisitiveness into good and evil, which is selfish, and savoreth of a distrust of God, and is that sin, and fruit of sin, which the learned world too little feareth.

III. That God is the rewarder of them that diligently seek him, and that holy souls shall be in blessedness with Christ, these following evidences, conjoined, do evince, on which my soul doth raise its hopes.

I. The soul, which is an immortal spirit, must be immortally in a good or bad condition: but man's soul is an immortal spirit, and the good are not in a bad condition. Its immortality is proved thus: A spiritual, or most pure, invisible substance, naturally endowed with the power, virtue, or faculty of vital action, intellection and volition, which is not annihilated nor destroyed by separation of parts, nor ceaseth, or loseth, either its power, species, individuation, or action, is an immortal spirit. But such is the soul of man, as shall be manifested by parts.

1. The soul is a substance; for that which is nothing can do nothing: but it doth move, understand, and will. No man will deny that this is done by something in us, and by some substance, and that substance is it which we call the soul. It is not nothing, and it is within us.

As to them that say, it is the temperament of several parts conjoined, I have elsewhere fully confuted them, and proved, (1.) That it is some one part that is the agent on the rest, which all they confess that think it to be the material spirits, or fiery part. It is not bones and flesh that understand, but a purer substance, as all acknowledge. (2.) What part soever it be, it can do no more than it is able to do, and a conjunction of many parts, of which no one hath the power of vitality, intellection or volition, formally or eminently, can never, by contemperation, do those acts; for there can be no more in the effect than is in the cause, otherwise it were no effect.

The vanity of their objections that tell us, a lute, a watch, a

book, perform that by coöperation which no one part can do, I have elsewhere manifested. (1.) Many strings, indeed, have many motions, and so have many effects on the ear and fantasy, which in us are sound and harmony: but all is but a percussion of the air by strings, and were not that motion received by a sensitive soul, it would be no music or melody; so that there is nothing done but what each part had power to do. But intellection and volition are not the conjunct motions of all parts of the body, receiving their form in a nobler intellective nature, as the sound of the strings maketh melody in man: if it were so, that receptive nature still would be as excellent as the effect importeth. (2.) And the watch, or clock, doth but move according to the action of the spring, or poise; but that it moveth in such an order as becometh to man a sign and measure of time, this is from man who ordereth it to that use. But there is nothing in the motion but what the parts have their power to cause; and that it signifieth the hour of the days to us, is no action, but an object used by a rational soul, as it can use the shadow of a tree, or house, that yet doth nothing. (3.) And so a book doth nothing at all, but is a mere objective ordination of passive signs, by which man's active intellect can understand what the writer, or orderer, did intend; so that here is nothing done beyond the power of the agent, nor any thing in the effect which was not in the cause, either formally or eminently. But for a company of atoms, of which no one hath sense or reason, to become sensitive and rational by mere conjunct motion, is an effect beyond the power of the supposed cause.

But as some think so basely of our noblest acts, as to think that contempered agitated atoms can perform them, that have no natural intellective, or sensitive, virtue or power in themselves, so others think so highly of them, as to take them to be the acts only of God, or some universal soul in the body of man; and so that there is no life, sense, or reason, in the world but God himself, (or such an universal soul;) and so, that either every man is God, as to his soul, or that it is the body only that is to be called man, as distinct from God. But this is the self-ensnaring and self-perplexing temerity of busy, bold, and arrogant heads, that know not their own capacity and measure. And on the like reasons, they must at last come, with others, to say, that all passive matter also is God, and that God is the universe, consisting of an active soul and passive body. As if God were no cause, and could make nothing, or nothing with life, or sense, or reason.

But why depart we from things certain, by such presumptions as these? Is it not certain that there are baser creatures in the world than men or angels? Is it not certain that one man is not

another? Is it not certain that some men are in torment of body and mind? And will it be a comfort to a man in such torment to tell him that he is God, or that he is part of an universal soul? Would not a man on the rack, or in the stone, or other misery, say, 'Call me by what name you please, that easeth not my pain. If I be a part of God, or an universal soul, I am sure I am a tormented, miserable part. And if you could make me believe that God hath some parts which are not serpents, toads, devils, or wicked or tormented men, you must give me other senses, and perceptive powers, before it will comfort me to hear that I am not such a part. And if God had wicked and tormented parts on earth, why may he not have such, and I be one of them, hereafter? And if I be a holy and happy part of God, or of an universal soul on earth, why may not I hope to be such hereafter?'

We deny not but that God is the continued, first cause of all being whatsoever; and that the branches and fruit depend not, as effects, so much on the causality of the stock and roots, as the creature doth on God; and that it is an impious conceit to think that the world, or any part of it, is a being independent, and separated totally from God, or subsisting without his continued causation. But cannot God cause, as a creator, by making that which is not himself? This yieldeth the self-deceiver no other honor nor happiness but what equally belongeth to a devil, to a fly, or worm, to a dunghill, or to the worst and most miserable man?

2. As man's soul is a substance, so is it a substance differenced formally from all inferior substances, by an innate (indeed essential) power, virtue or faculty, of vital action, intellection, and free-will; for we find all these acts performed by it, as motion, light, and heat are by the fire or sun. And if any should think that these actions are, like those of a musician, compounded of the agent's (principal and organical several) parts, could he prove it, no more would follow, but that the lower powers (the sensitive, or spirits) are to the higher as a passive organ, receiving its operations; and that the intellectual soul hath the power of causing intellection and volition by its action on the inferior parts, as a man can cause such motions of his lute, as shall be melody (not to it, but) to himself; and, consequently, that as music is but a lower operation of man, (whose proper acts of intellection and volition are above it,) so intellection and volition in the body are not the noblest acts of the soul; but it performed them by an eminent power, which can do greater things. And if this could be proved, what would it tend to the unbeliever's ends, or to the disadvantage of our hopes and comforts?

3. That man's soul, at death, is not annihilated, even the atom-

ists and epicureans will grant, who think that no atom in the universe is annihilated ; and we that see, not only the sun and heavens continued, but every grain of matter, and that compounds are changed by dissolution of parts, and rarefaction, or migration, &c., and not by annihilation, have no reason to dream that God will annihilate one soul, (though he can do it, if he please, yea, and annihilate all the world :) it is a thing beyond a rational expectation.

4. And a destruction by the dissolution of the parts of the soul, we need not fear. For, (1.) Either an intellectual spirit is divisible and partible, or not : if not, we need not fear it : if it be, either it is a thing that nature tendeth to, or not ; but that nature doth not tend to it, is evident. For there is naturally so strange and strong an inclination to unity, and averseness to separation in all things, that even earth and stones, that have no other (known) natural motion, have yet an aggregate motion in their gravitation : but if you will separate the parts from the rest, it must be by force. And water is yet more averse from partition without force, and more inclined to union than earth, and air than water, and fire than air ; so he that will cut a sunbeam into pieces, and make many of one, must be an extraordinary agent. And, surely, spirits, even intellectual spirits, will be no less averse from partition, and inclined to keep their unity, than fire or a sunbeam is ; so that naturally it is not a thing to be feared, that it should fall into pieces.

(2.) And he that will say, that the God of nature will change, and overcome the nature that he hath made, must give us good proofs of it, or it is not to be feared. And if he should do it as a punishment, we must find such a punishment somewhere threatened, either in his natural or supernatural law, which we do not, and therefore need not fear it.

(3.) But if it were to be feared that souls were partible, and would be broken into parts, this would be no destruction of them, either as to their substance, powers, form, or action, but only a breaking of one soul into many ; for, being not compounded of heterogeneous parts, but, as simple elements, of homogeneous only, as every atom of earth is earth, and every drop of water in the sea is water, and every particle of air and fire is air and fire, and have all the properties of earth, water, air, and fire ; so would it be with every particle of an intellectual spirit. But who can see cause to dream of such a partition, never threatened by God ?

5. And that souls lose not their formal powers, or virtues, we have great reason to conceive ; because they are their natural essence, not as mixed, but simple substances : and though some imagine that the passive elements may, by attenuation or incassation, be transmuted one into another, yet we see that earth is still earth,

and water is water, and air is air ; and their conceit hath no proof ; and, were it proved, it would but prove that none of these are a first or proper element : but what should an intellectual spirit be changed into ? how should it lose its formal power ? Not by nature ; for its nature hath nothing that tendeth to deterioration, or decay, or self-destruction. The sun doth not decay by its wonderful motion, light, and heat ; and why should spirits ? Not by God's destroying them, or changing their nature ; for, though all things are in constant motion, or revolution, he continueth the natures of the simple beings, and sheweth us, that he delighteth in a constancy of operations, insomuch that, hence, Aristotle thought the world eternal. And God hath made no law that threateneth to do it as a penalty. Therefore, to dream that intellectual spirits shall be turned into other things, and lose their essential, formal powers, which specify them, is without and against all sober reason. Let them first but prove that the sun loseth motion, light and heat, and is turned into air, or water, or earth. Such changes are beyond a rational fear.

6. But some men dream that souls shall sleep, and cease their acts, though they lose not their powers. But this is more unreasonable than the former. For it must be remembered that it is not a mere obediential, passive power that we speak of, but an active power, consisting in as great an inclination to act, as passive natures have to forbear action. So that if such a nature act not, it must be because its natural inclination is hindered by a stronger : and who shall hinder it ?

(1.) God would not continue an active power, force, and inclination in nature, and forcibly hinder the operation of that nature which he himself continueth ; unless penally, for some special cause, which he never gave us any notice of by any threatening, but the contrary.

(2.) Objects will not be wanting, for all the world will be still at hand, and God above all. It is, therefore, an unreasonable conceit to think that God will continue an active, vital, intellective, volitive nature, form, power, force, inclination, in a noble substance, which shall use none of these for many hundred or thousand years, and so continue them in vain.

Nay, (3.) It is rather to be thought that some action is their constant state, without which the cessation of their very form would be inferred.

But all that can be said, with reason, is, that separated souls, and souls hereafter in spiritual bodies, will have actions of another mode, and very different from these that we now perceive in flesh : and be it so. They will yet be, radically, of the same kind, and they will be, formally or eminently, such as we now call vitality, intel-

lection, and volition ; and they will be no lower, or less excellent, if not far more ; and then what the difference will be, Christ knoweth, whom I trust, and in season I shall know. But to talk of a dead life, and an unactive activity, or a sleeping soul, is fitter for a sleeping than a waking man.

It is true, that diseases or hurts do now hinder the soul's intellectual perceptions in the body ; and in infancy, and sleep, they are imperfect. Which proveth, indeed, that the acts, commonly called intellection and volition, have now something in them also of sensation, and that sensitive operations are diversified by the organs of the several senses. And that bare intellection and volition, without any sensation, is now scarce to be observed in us, though the soul may have such acts intrinsically, and in its profundity. For it is now so united to this body, that it acteth on it as our form ; and, indeed, the acts observed by us cannot be denied to be such as are specified, or modified, at least, by the agents, and the recipients, and sub-agents' parts conjunct. But, (1.) As the sun would do the same thing, *ex parte sui*, if in *vacuo* only it sent forth its beams, though this were no illumination, or calefaction, because there were no recipient to be illuminated and heated by it. And it would lose nothing by the want of objects ; so the soul, had it no body to act on, would have its profound immanent acts of self-living, self-perceiving, and self-loving, and all its external acts on other objects, which need not organs of sense for their approximation. And, (2.) Its sensitive faculty is itself, or such as it is not separated from, though the particular sorts of sensation may be altered with their uses ; and therefore it may still act on, or with, the sense ; and if one way of sensation be hindered, it hath another. (3.) And how far this lantern of flesh doth help, or hinder, its operations, we know not yet, but shall know hereafter. *Sondius de Orig. Animæ* (though an heretical writer) hath said much to prove that the body is a hindrance, and not a help, to the soul's intuition. And if ratiocination be a compound act, yet intuition may be done forever by the soul alone. (4.) But as we are not to judge what powers the soul hath, when the acts are hindered, but when they are done ; nor what souls were made by God for, by their state in the womb, or infancy, or diseases, but by our ordinary, mature state of life ; so we have little reason to think that the same God who made them for life, intellection and volitions here, will not continue the same powers to the same, or as noble uses hereafter, whether with organs, or without, as pleaseth him. If in this flesh our spirits were not inactive and useless, we have no reason to think that they will be so hereafter, and that forever.

This greatest and hardest of all objections doth not make us confess, (with *Contarenius, contra Pomponatium de Anim. Immortalit.*)

that though, by the light of nature, we may know the immortality of souls, (and that they lose not their powers or activity,) yet, without supernatural light, we know not what manner of action they will have in their separated state, or in another world, because here they act according to objective termination, and the receptivity of the sense and fantasy, and *recipitur ad modum recipientis*; and in the womb we perceive not that it acteth intellectually at all.

But we know, That, (1.) If even then it differed not in its formal power from the souls of brutes, it would not so much afterward differ in act; and it would never be raised to that which was not virtually in its nature at the first. (2.) And we find that even very little children have quick and strong knowledge of such objects as are brought within their reach; and that their ignorance is not for want of an intellectual power, but for want of objects, or images of things, which time, and use, and conversation among objects, must furnish their fantasies and memories with. And so a soul in the womb, or in an apoplexy, hath not objects of intellection within its reach to act upon; but is as the sun to a room that hath no windows to let in its light. (3.) And what if its profound vitality, self-perception, and self-love, be by a kind of sensation and intuition, rather than by discursive reason; I doubt not but some late philosophers make snares to themselves and others, by too much vilifying sense and sensitive souls, as if sense were but some losable accident of contempered atoms: but sensation (though diversified by organs and uses, and so far mutable) is the act of a noble, spiritual form and virtue. And as *Chambre*, and some others, make brutes a lower rank of rationals, and man another higher species, as having his nobler reason for higher ends; so for man to be the noblest order (here) of sensitives, and to have an intellect to order, and govern sensations, and connect them and improve them, were a noble work, if we had no higher. And if intellection and volition were but a higher species of internal sensation than imagination and the fantasy and memory are, it might yet be a height that should set man specifically above the brutes. And I am daily more and more persuaded, that intellectual souls are essentially sensitive and more, and that their sensation never ceaseth. (4.) And still I say, that it is to nature itself a thing unlikely, that the God of nature will long continue a soul that hath formally or naturally an intellective power, in a state in which it shall have no use of it. Let others, that will, inquire whether it shall have a vehicle or none to act in, and whether aërial, or igneous, and ethereal, and whether it be really an intellectual sort of fire, as material as the solar fire, whose (not compounding, but) *inadequatè-conceptus obiectivi* are, an igneous substance, and formal virtue of life, sense, and

intellection, with other such puzzling doubts ; it satisfieth me, that God will not continue its nobler powers in vain ; and how they shall be exercised, is known to him ; and that God's word tells us more than nature. And withal, life, intuition, and love, (or volition,) are acts so natural to the soul, (as motion, light, and heat, *quoad actum* to fire,) that I cannot conceive how its separation should hinder them, but rather that its incorporation hindereth the two latter, by hiding objects, whatever be said of abstractive knowledge and memory.

7. But the greatest difficulty to natural knowledge is, whether souls will continue their individuation, or rather fall into one common soul, or return so to God that gave them, as to be no more divers (or many) individuals, as now ; as extinguished candles are united to the illuminated air, or to the sunbeams ; but of this I have elsewhere said much for others ; and for myself, I find I need but this : 1. That, as I said before, either souls are partible substances, or not ; if not partible, how are they unible ? If many may be made one, by conjunction of substances, then that one may (by God) be made many again, by partition. Either all (or many) souls are now but one, (individuate only by matter, as many gulfs in the sea, or many candles lighted by the sun,) or not ; if they are not one now in several bodies, what reason have we to think that they will be one hereafter, any more than now ? Augustine (*de Anim.*) was put on the question, 1. Whether souls are one, and not many. And that he utterly denied. 2. Whether they are many, and not one. And that, it seemeth, he could not digest. 3. Whether they were at once both one and many. Which he thought would seem to some ridiculous, but he seemeth most to incline to. And as God is the God of nature, so nature (even of the devils themselves) dependeth on him, as I said, more than the leaves or fruit do on the tree ; and we are all his offspring, and live, and move, and are in him ; Acts xvii. But we are certain, for all this, 1. That we are not God. 2. That we are yet many individuals, and not all one soul or man. If our union should be as near as the leaves and fruit on the same tree, yet those leaves and fruit are numerous, and individual leaves and fruits, though parts of the tree. And were this proved of our present or future state, it would not alter our hopes or fears ; for, as now, though we all live, move, and be in God, (and, as some dream, are parts of a common soul,) yet it is certain, that some are better and happier than others ; some wise and good ; and some foolish and evil ; some in pain and misery, and some at ease, and in pleasure ; and (as I said) it is now no ease to the miserable, to be told that, radically, all souls are one ; no more will it be hereafter, nor can men reasonably hope for, or fear such an union, as shall make their state the same. We see

in nature, as I have elsewhere said, that if you graft many sorts of scions (some sweet, some bitter, some crabs) on the same stock, they will be one tree, and yet have diversity of fruit. If souls be not unible nor partible substances, there is no place for this doubt: if they be, they will be still what they are, notwithstanding any such union with a common soul. As a drop of water in the sea is a separable part, and still itself; and as a crab upon the foresaid stock, or tree. And the good or bad quality ceaseth not by any union with others.

Sure we are, that all creatures are in God, by close dependence, and yet that the good are good, and the bad are bad; and that God is good, and hath no evil; and that, when man is tormented, or miserable, God suffereth nothing by it, (as the whole man doth, when but a tooth doth ache,) for he would not hurt himself were he passive. Therefore, to dream of any such cessation of our individuation by any union with a creature, as shall make the good less good or happy, or the bad less bad or miserable, is a groundless folly.

Yet it is very probable that there will be a nearer union of holy souls with God and Christ, and one another, than we can here conceive of: but this is so far from being to be feared, that it is the highest of our hopes. (1.) God himself (though equally every where in his essence) doth operate very variously on his creatures. On the wicked, he operateth as the first cause of nature, as his sun shineth on them. On some, he operateth by common grace: to some he giveth faith to prepare them for the indwelling of his Spirit. In believers he dwelleth by love, and they in him; and if we may use such a comparison, as Satan acteth on some only by suggestions, but on others so despotically as that it is called his possessing them, so God's Spirit worketh on holy souls, so powerfully and constantly, as is called his possessing them. And yet, on the human nature of Christ, the divine nature of the second person hath such a further, extraordinary operation, as is justly called a personal union; which is not by a more essential presence, (for that is every where,) but by a peculiar operation and relation: and so, holy souls, being under a more felicitating operation of God, may well be said to have a nearer union with them than now they have.

(2.) And I observe that (as is aforesaid) all things have naturally a strong inclination to union and communion with their like: every clod and stone inclineth to the earth: water would go to water, air to air, fire to fire: birds and beasts associate with their like; and the noblest natures are most strongly thus inclined; and therefore I have natural reason to think that it will be so with holy souls.

(3.) And I find, that the inordinate contraction of man to himself, and to the interest of this individual person, with the defect of love to all about us, according to every creature's goodness, and especially to God, the infinite good, whom we should love above ourselves, is the very sum of all the pravity of man. And all the injustice and injury to others, and all the neglect of good works in the world, and all our daily terrors, and self-distracting, self-tormenting cares, and griefs, and fears, proceed from this inordinate love and adhesion to ourselves; therefore I have reason to think, that, in our better state, we shall perfectly love others as ourselves, and the selfish love will turn into a common and a divine love, which must be by our preferring the common, and the divine good and interest.

And I am so sensible of the power and plague of selfishness, and how it now corrupteth, tempteth, and disquieteth me, that when I feel any fears, lest individuation cease, and my soul fall into one common soul, (as the stoics thought all souls did at death,) I find great cause to suspect, that this ariseth from the power of this corrupting selfishness; for reason seeth no cause at all to fear it, were it so.

(4.) For I find, also, that the nature of love is to desire as near a union as possible; and the strongest love doth strongest desire it. Fervent lovers think they can scarce be too much one: and love is our perfection, and therefore so is union.

(5.) And I find, that when Christians had the first and full pourings out of the Spirit, they had the serventest love, and the nearest union, and the least desire of propriety and distance.

(6.) And I find, that Christ's prayer for the felicity of his disciples, is a prayer for their unity; John xvii. 22, 23. And in this he placeth much of their perfection.

(7.) And I find, also, that man is of a social nature, and that all men find by experience, that conjunction in societies is needful for their safety, strength, and pleasure.

(8.) And I find, that my soul would fain be nearer God, and that darkness and distance is my misery, and near communion is it that would answer all the tendencies of my soul: why, then, should I fear too near a union?

I think it utterly improbable, that my soul should become more nearly united to any creature than to God; (though it be of the same kind with other souls, and infinitely below God;) for God is as near me as I am to myself: I still depend on him, as the effect upon its total, constant cause; and that not as the fruit upon the tree, which borroweth all from the earth, water, air, and fire, which it communicateth to its fruit; but as a creature on its Creator, who hath no being but what it receiveth totally from God, by constant

communication. Hence Antonine, Seneca, and the rest of the stoics, thought that all the world was God, or one great animal, consisting of divine spirit and matter, as man of soul and body; sometimes calling the supposed soul of the world God; and sometimes calling the whole world God; but still meaning that the universe was but one spirit and body united, and that we all are parts of God, or of the body of God, or accidents, at least.

And even the Popish mystical divines, in their pretensions to the highest perfection, say the same in sense; such as Benedict. Anglus in his *Regula Perfectionis*, (approved by many doctors,) who placed much of his supereminent life in our believing verily that there is nothing but God, as the beams are to the sun, and as the heat is to the fire; (which really is itself;) and so teaching us to rest in all things as good, as being nothing but God's essential will, which is himself, (resolving even our sins and imperfections accordingly into God, so that they are God's or none.)

And all these men have as fair a pretense for the conceits of such an union with God now, as for such an union after death: for their reason is, 1. That God being infinite, there can be no more beings than his own; but God and the smallest being distinct, would be more entity than God alone; but infinity can have no addition. 2. Because *ens et bonum convertuntur*; but God only is good.

And if we are, notwithstanding all this, distinct beings from God now, we shall not be so advanced as to be deified, and of creatures, or distinct beings, turned into a being infinitely above us. If we be not parts of God now, we shall not be so then.

But if they could prove that we are so now, we should quickly prove to them, 1. That then God hath material, divisible parts, (as the stoics thought.) 2. And that we are no such parts, as are not distinct from one another; but some are tormented, and some happy. And, 3. That (as is said) it will be no abatement of the misery of the tormented, nor the felicity of the blessed, to tell them that they are all parts of God; for, though the manner of our union with him, and dependence on him, be past our comprehension, yet that we are distinct and distant from each other, and have each one a joy or misery of his own, is past all doubt. Therefore, there is no union with God to be feared by holy souls, but the utmost possible to be highest desired.

And if our union with God shall not cease our individuation, or resolve us into a principle to be feared, we may say also of our union with any common soul, or many: if we be unible, we are partible, and so have a distinct, though not a divided substance, which will have its proper accidents. All plants are parts of the earth, really united to it, and radicated in it, and live and are nourished

by it; and yet a vine is a vine; and an apple is an apple; and a rose is a rose; and a nettle is a nettle. And few men would be toiled horses, or toads, if it were proved that they are animated by a common soul.

But God letteth us see, that though the world be one, yet he d ighteth in a wonderful diversity and multiplicity of individuals. How various and numerous are they in the sea, and on the land, and in the air! And are there none in the other world? How come the stars therein to be so numerous, which are of the same element? and though, perhaps, Saturn, or some other planets, or many stars, may send forth their radiant effluvia, or parts, into the same air, which the sunbeams seem totally to fill and illuminate, yet the rays of the sun, and of other stars, are not the same, how near soever in the same air.

Were there now no more contraction by egoity, or propriety among men, nor mine and thine did signify no more, nor the distance were greater than that of the several drops of water in the sea, or particles of light in the illuminated air, but I had all my part in such a perfect unity and communion with all others, and knew that all were as happy as I, so that there were no divisions by cross interests or minds, but all were one, certainly it would make my own comforts greater by far than they are now. Are not an hundred candles set together and united as splendid a flame as if they were all set asunder? So one soul, one love, one joy, would be.*

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Obj. But this would equalize the good and bad, or, at least, those that were good in several degrees; and where, then, were the reward and punishment?

Ans. It would not equal them at all, any more than distinct personality would do: for, 1. The souls of all holy persons may be so united, as that the souls of the wicked shall have no part in that union. Whether the souls of the wicked shall be united in one sinful, miserable soul, or, rather, but in one sinful society, or be greatlier separate, disunited, contrary to each other, and militant, as part of their sin and misery, is nothing to this case. 2. Yet natural and moral union must be differenced. God is the root of nature to the worst; and however in one sense it is said, that there is nothing in God but God, yet it is true, that in him all live, and move, and have their being; but yet the wicked's in-being in God doth afford them no sanctifying or beatifying com-

* Two paragraphs are here omitted;—they contain an abstruse answer to an abstruse objection, both being founded, like much of the reasoning in the context, on a philosophy now obsolete.—*Ed.*

munion with him, as experience sheweth us in this life ; which yet holy souls have, as being made capable recipients of it. As I said, different plants, briers, and cedars, the stinking and the sweet, are implanted parts (or accidents) of the same world or earth. 3. And the godly themselves may have as different a share of happiness in one common soul, as they have now of holiness, and so as different rewards, (even as roses, and rosemary, and other herbs, differ in the same garden, and several fruits in the same orchard, or on the same tree.) For, if souls are unible, and so partible substances, they have neither more nor less of substance or holiness for their union ; and so will each have his proper measure. As a tun of water cast into the sea will there still be the same, and more than a spoonful cast into it.

Obj. But spirits are not as bodies, extensive and quantitative, and so not partible or divisible ; and therefore your supposition is vain.

Ans. 1. My supposition is but the objector's ; for, if they confess that spirits are substances, (as cannot with reason be denied ; for they that specify their operations by motion only, yet suppose a pure, proper substance to be the substance or thing moved,) then when they talk of many souls becoming one, it must be by conjunction, and increase of the substance of that one ; or when they say, that they were always one, they will confess, withal, that they now differ in number, as individuate in the body. And who will say, that millions of millions are no more than one of all those millions ? Number is a sort of quantity ; and all souls in the world are more than Cain's or Abel's only ; one feelth not what another feelth ; one knoweth not what another knoweth. And indeed, though souls have not such corporeal extension as passive, gross, bodily matter hath, yet, as they are more noble, they have a more noble sort of extension, quantity, or degrees, according to which all mankind conceive of all the spiritual substance of the universe ; yea, all the angels, or all the souls on earth, as being more, and having more substance than one man's soul alone. 2. And the fathers, for the most part, especially the Greeks, (yea, and the second council of Nice,) thought that spirits created had a purer sort of material being, which Tertullian called a body ; and, doubtless, all created spirits have somewhat of passiveness ; for they do *recipere vel pati* from the divine influx ; only God is wholly impassive. We are moved when we move, and acted when we act ; and it is hard to conceive, that (when matter is commonly called passive) that which is passive should have no sort of matter in a large sense taken ; and if it had any parts distinguishable, they are by God divisible. 3. But if the contrary be supposed, that all

souls are no more than one, and so that there is no place for uniting or partition, there is no place then for the objection of all souls becoming one, and of losing individuation, unless they mean by annihilation.

But that God who (as is said) delighteth both in the union, and yet in the wonderful multiplicity of creatures, and will not make all stars to be only one; though fire have a most uniting or aggregative inclination, hath further given experimental notice that there is individuation in the other world as well as here, even innumerable angels and devils, and not one only; as apparitions and witches, and many other evidences, prove; of which more anon. So that, all things considered, there is no reason to fear that the souls shall lose their individuation or activity, (though they change their manner of action,) any more than their being or formal power; and so it is naturally certain that they are immortal.

And if holy souls are so far immortal, I need not prove that they will be immortally happy; for their holiness will infer it; and few will ever dream that it shall there go ill with them that are good, and that the most just and holy God will not use those well whom he maketh holy.

II. That holy souls shall be hereafter happy, seemeth to be one of the common notices of nature planted in the consciences of mankind; and it is therefore acknowledged by the generality of the world that freely use their understandings. Most, yea, almost all the heathen nations at this day believe it, besides the Mahometans; and it is the most barbarous cannibals and Brazilians that do not, whose understandings have had the least improvement, and who have rather an inconsiderate nescience of it, than a denying opposition. And though some philosophers denied it, they were a small and contemned party: and though many of the rest were somewhat dubious, it was only a certainty which they professed to want, and not a probability or opinion that it was true; and both the vulgar and the deep-studied men believed it, and those that questioned it were the half-studied philosophers, who, not resting in the natural notice, nor yet reaching full intellectual evidence of it by discourse, had found out matter of difficulty to puzzle them, and came not to that degree of wisdom as would have resolved them.

And even among apostates from Christianity, most, or many, still acknowledge the soul's immortality, and the felicity and reward of holy souls, to be of the common notices, known by nature to mankind. Julian was so much persuaded of it, that, on that account, he exhorteth his priests and subjects to great strictness and holiness of life, and to see that the Christian did not exceed them: and, among us, the Lord Herbert *de Veritate*, and many others that seem not to believe our supernatural revelations of

Christianity, do fully acknowledge it. Besides those philosophers who most opposed Christianity, as Porphyrius, Maximus Tyrius, and such others.

And we find that this notice hath so deep a root in nature, that few of those that study and labor themselves into bestiality (or sadducism) are able to excuse the fears of future misery, but conscience overcometh, or troubleth them much, at least, when they have done the worst they can against it. And whence should all this be in man and not in beast, if man had no further reason of hopes and fears than they? Are a few Sadducees wiser, by their forced or crude conceits, than all the world that are taught by nature itself?

III. If the God of nature have made it every man's certain duty to make it his chief care and work in this life to seek for happiness hereafter, then such a happiness there is for them that truly seek it. But the antecedent is certain, as I have elsewhere proved. *Ergo*, &c.

As to the antecedent. The world is made up of three sorts of men, as to the belief of future retribution; 1. Such as take it for a certain truth; such are Christians, Mahometans, and most heathens. 2. Such as take it for uncertain, but most probable or likeliest to be true. 3. Such as take it for uncertain, but rather think it untrue. For, as none can be certain that it is false, which indeed is true, so I never yet met with one that would say he was certain that it was false; so that I need not trouble you with the mention of any other party or opinion; but if any should say so, it is easy to prove that he speaketh falsely of himself.

And that it is the duty of all these, but especially of the two former sorts, to make it their chief care and work to seek their happiness in the life to come, is easily proved thus:—Natural reason requireth every man to seek that which is best for himself, with the greatest diligence; but natural reason saith that probability, or possibility, of the future everlasting happiness is better and more worthy to be sought, than any thing attainable in this present life, (which doth not suppose it.) *Ergo*, &c.

The major is past doubt. Good and felicity being necessarily desired by the will of man, that which is best, and known so to be, must be most desired.

And the minor should be as far past doubt to men that use not their sense against their reason. For, 1. In this life there is nothing certain to be continued one hour. 2. It is certain that all will quickly end, and that the longest life is short. 3. It is certain that time and pleasure past are nothing, properly nothing; and so no better to us than if they had never been. 4. And it is certain that, while we possess them, they are poor, unsatisfactory things,

the pleasure of the flesh being no sweeter to a man than to a beast, and the trouble that accompanieth it much more. Beasts have not the cares, fears, and sorrows, upon foresight, which man hath. They fear not death upon the foreknowledge of it, nor fear any misery after death, nor are put upon any labor, sufferings, or trials, to obtain a future happiness, or avoid a future misery. All which considered, he speaketh not by reason, who saith this vain, vexatious life is better than the possibility or probability of the everlasting glory.

Now, as to the consequence, or major of the first argument, it is evident of itself, from God's perfection, and the nature of his works. God maketh it not man's natural duty to lay out his chief care and labor of all his life on that which is not, or to seek that which man was never made to attain; for, then, 1. All his duty should result from mere deceit and falsehood, and God should govern all the world by a lie, which cannot be his part who wanteth neither power, wisdom, nor love, to rule them by truth and righteousness, and who hath printed his image both on his laws and on his servants; in which laws lying is condemned, and the better any man is, the more he hateth it; and liars are loathed by all mankind. 2. And then the better any man is, and the more he doth his duty, the more deluded, erroneous, and miserable should he be. For he should spend that care and labor of his life upon deceit, for that which he shall never have, and so should lose his time and labor: and he should deny his flesh those temporal pleasures which bad men take, and suffer persecutions and injuries from the wicked, and all for nothing, and on mistake: and the more wicked, or more unbelieving, any man is, the wiser and happier should he be, as being in the right, when he denieth the life to come, and all duty and labor in seeking it, or in avoiding future punishment; and while he taketh his utmost pleasure here, he hath all that man was made for. But all this is utterly unsuitable to God's perfection, and to his other works: for he maketh nothing in vain, nor can he lie; much less will he make holiness itself, and all that duty and work of life which reason itself obligeth all men, to be not only in vain but hurtful to them. But of this argument I have been elsewhere larger.

IV. Man differeth so much from brutes in the knowledge of God, and of his future possibilities, that it proveth that he differeth as much in his capacity and certain hopes. 1. As to the antecedent, man knoweth that there is a God by his works. He knoweth that this God is our absolute Lord, our ruler and our end. He knoweth that, naturally, we owe him all our love and obedience. He knoweth that good men use not to let their most faithful servants be losers by their fidelity; nor do they use to set them to labor in vain,

He knoweth that man's soul is immortal, or, at least, that it is far more probable that it is so; and therefore that it must accordingly be well or ill forever, and that this should be most cared for. 2. And why should God give him all this knowledge more than to the brutes, if he were made for no more enjoyment than the brutes, of what he knoweth? Every wise man maketh his work fit for the use that he intendeth it to; and will not God? So that the consequence also is proved from the divine perfection; and if God were not perfect, he were not God. The denial of a God, therefore, is the result of the denial of man's future hopes.

And, indeed, though it be but an analogical reason that brutes have, those men seem to be in the right who place the difference between man and brutes more in the objects, tendency, and work of our reason, than in our reason itself as such, and so make *animal religiosum* to be more of his description than *animal rationale*. About their own low concerns, a fox, a dog, yea, an ass, and a goose, have such actions as we know not well how to ascribe to any thing below some kind of reasoning, or a perception of the same importance. But they think not of God, and his government, and laws, nor of obeying, trusting, or loving him, nor of the hopes or fears of another life, nor of the joyful prospect of it. These are that work that man was made for, which is the chief difference from the brutes; and shall we unman ourselves?

V. The justice of God, as governor of the world, inferreth different rewards hereafter, as I have largely elsewhere proved. 1. God is not only a mover of all that moveth, but a moral ruler of man by laws, and judgment, and executions, else there were no proper law of nature, which few are so unnatural as to deny; and man should have no proper duty, but only motion as he is moved. And, then, how cometh a government by laws to be set up under God by men? And then there were no sin or fault in any; for if there were no law and duty, but only necessitated motion, all would be moved as the mover pleased, and there could be no sin; and then there would be no moral good, but forced or necessary motion. But all this is most absurd; and experience telleth us that God doth, *de facto*, morally govern the world; and his right is unquestionable.

And if God were not the ruler of the world, by law and judgment, the world would have no universal laws; for there is no man that is the universal ruler: and then kings and other supreme powers would be utterly lawless and ungoverned, as having none above them to give them laws, and so they would be capable of no sin or fault, and of no punishment; which yet neither their subjects' interest, nor their own consciences, will grant, or allow them thoroughly to believe.

And if God be a ruler, he is just ; or else he were not perfect, nor so good as he requireth princes and judges on earth to be. An unjust ruler or judge is abominable to all mankind. Righteousness is the great attribute of the universal King.

But how were he a righteous ruler, 1. If he drew all men to obey him by deceit ? 2. If he obliged them to seek and expect a felicity or reward which he will never give them ? 3. If he make man's duty his misery ? 4. If he require him to labor in vain ? 5. If he suffer the wicked to persecute his servants to the death, and make duty costly, and give no after recompense ? 6. If he let the most wicked on the earth pass unpunished, or to escape as well hereafter as the best, and to live in greater pleasure here ? The objections fetched from the intrinsic good of duty I have elsewhere answered.

VI. But God hath not left us to the light of mere nature, as being too dark for men as blind as we. The gospel revelation is the clear foundation of our faith and hope. Christ hath brought life and immortality to light. One from heaven that is greater than an angel was sent to tell us what is there, and which is the way to secure our hopes. He hath risen, and conquered death, and entered before as our captain and forerunner into the everlasting habitations. And he hath all power in heaven and earth, and all judgment is committed to him, that he might give eternal life to his elect. He hath frequently and expressly promised it them, that they shall live because he liveth, and shall not perish but have everlasting life ; Matt. xxviii. 18. John v. 22. xvii. 2. xji. 26. iii. 16. Rom. viii. 35—38. And how fully he hath proved and sealed the truth of his word and office to us, I have so largely opened in my 'Reasons of the Christian Religion,' and 'Unreasonableness of Infidelity,' and in my 'Life of Faith,' &c. ; and since, in my 'Household Catechising,' that I will not here repeat it.

And as all his word is full of promises of our future glory at the resurrection, so we are not without assurance that at death the departing soul doth enter upon a state of joy and blessedness. "They that died to (or in) the flesh according to men, do live in the Spirit according to God ;" 1 Pet. iv. 6. For,

1. He expressly promised the penitent, crucified thief, "This day shalt thou be with me in paradise ;" Luke xxiii. 43. ●

2. He gave us the narrative or parable of the damned sensualist, and of Lazarus, (Luke xvi.) to instruct us, and not to deceive us.

3. He tells the Sadducees that God is not the God of the dead, (as his subjects and beneficiaries,) but of the living ; Matt. xxii. 32.

4. Enoch and Elias were taken up to heaven, and Moses that died, appeared with Elias on the mount ; Matt. xvii.

5. He telleth us, (Luke xii. 4.) that they that kill the body, are

not able to kill the soul. Indeed, if the soul were not immortal, the resurrection were impossible. It might be a new creation of another soul, but not a resurrection of the same, if the same be annihilated. It is certain that the Jews believed the immortality of the soul, in that they believed the resurrection and future life of the same man.

6. And Christ's own soul was commended into his Father's hands, (Luke xxiii. 46.) and was in paradise, when his body was in the grave, to show us what shall become of ours.

7. And he hath promised, that where he is, there shall his servants be also; John xii. 26. And that the life here begun in us is eternal life, and that he that believeth in him shall not die, but shall live by him, as he liveth by the Father, for he dwelleth in God, and God in him, and in Christ, and Christ in him; John xvii. 3. and vi. 54. and iii. 16. 36. and vi. 47. 50. 56, 57. 1 John iv. 12, 13. Luke xvii. 21. Rom. xiv. 17.

8. And accordingly, Stephen that saw heaven opened, prayed the Lord Jesus to receive his spirit; Acts vii. 55. 59.

9. And we are come to Mount Sion, &c., to an innumerable company of angels, and to the spirits of the just made perfect; Heb. xii. 22, 23.

10. And Paul here desireth to depart and be with Christ, as far better. And to be absent from the body, and be present with the Lord; 2 Cor. v. 8.

11. And the dead that die in the Lord are blessed, from henceforth, that they may rest from their labors, and their works follow them.

12. And if the disobedient spirits be in prison, and the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah suffer the vengeance of eternal fire, (1 Pet. iii. 19. Jude 7.) then the just have eternal life. And if the Jews had not thought the soul immortal, Saul had not desired the witch to call up Samuel to speak with him. The rest I now pass by. We have many great and precious promises, on which a departed soul may trust.

13. And (Luke xvi. 9.) Christ expressly saith, that when we fail, (that is, must leave this world,) we shall be received into the everlasting habitations.

VII. And it is not nothing to encourage us to hope in him that hath made all these promises, when we find how he heareth prayers in this life, and thereby assureth his servants that he is their true and faithful Savior. We are apt, in our distress, to cry loud for mercy and deliverances, and when human help faileth, to promise God, that if he now will save us, we will thankfully acknowledge it his work; and yet, when we are delivered, to return not only to security, but to ingratitude, and think that our deliverance came but in

the course of common providence, and not indeed as an answer to our prayers. And therefore God in mercy reneweth both our distresses and our deliverances, that what once or twice will not convince us of, many and great deliverances may. This is my own case. O, how oft have I cried to him when men and means were nothing, and when no help in second causes did appear, and how oft, and suddenly, and mercifully, hath he delivered me! What sudden ease, what removal of long afflictions, have I had! such extraordinary changes, and beyond my own and others' expectations, when many plain-hearted, upright Christians have, by fasting and prayer, sought God on my behalf; as have over and over convinced me of special providence, and that God is indeed a hearer of prayers. And wonders I have seen done for others also, upon such prayers, more than for myself; yea, and wonders for the church and public societies. Though I and others are too like those Israelites, (Psalm lxxviii.) who cried to God in their troubles, and he oft delivered them out of their distress, but they quickly forgot his mercies, and their convictions, purposes, and promises, when they should have praised the Lord for his goodness, and declared his works with thanksgiving to the sons of men.

And what were all these answers and mercies but the fruits of Christ's power, fidelity, and love, the fulfillings of his promises, and the earnest of the greater blessings of immortality, which the same promises give me title to?

I know that no promise of hearing prayer setteth up our wills in absoluteness, or above God's, as if every will of ours must be fulfilled if we do but put it into a fervent or confident prayer; but if we ask any thing through Christ, according to his will, expressed in his promise, he will hear us. If a sinful love of this present life, or of ease, or wealth, or honor, should cause me to pray to God against death, or against all sickness, want, reproach, or other trials, as if I must live here in prosperity forever if I ask it, this sinful desire and expectation is not the work of faith, but of presumption. What if God will not abate me my last, or daily pains? What if he will continue my life no longer, whoever pray for it, and how earnestly soever? Shall I therefore forget how oft he hath heard prayers for me, and how wonderfully he hath helped both me and others? My faith hath oft been helped by such experiences; and shall I forget them, or question them without cause at last?

VIII. And it is a subordinate help to my belief of immortality with Christ, to find so much evidence that angels have friendly communion with us here, and therefore we shall have communion with them hereafter; Psalm xxxiv. 7. and xci. 11, 12. Luke xv. 10. 1 Cor. xi. 10. Heb. i. 14. and xii. 22. and xiii. 2. Matt. xviii. 10. and xxv. 31. and xiii. 39. 49. Acts v. 19. and viii. 26. and xii.

7. 23. They have charge of us, and pitch their tents about us; they bear us up; they rejoice at our repentance; they are the regardful witnesses of our behavior; they are ministering spirits for our good; they are our angels beholding the face of our heavenly Father. They will come with Christ in glorious attendance at the great and joyful day, and, as his executioners, they will separate the just from the unjust.

And it is not only the testimony of Scripture by which we know their communion with us, but also some degree of experience. Not only of old did they appear to the faithful as messengers from God, but of late times there have been testimonies of their ministration for us. Of which see *Zanchy de Angelis* and Mr. J. Ambrose, of our communion with angels. Many a mercy doth God give us by their ministry, and they that are now so friendly to us, and suitable to our communion and help, and make up one society with us, do hereby greatly encourage us to hope that we are made for the same region, work, and company, with these our blessed, loving friends. They were once in a life of trial, it seems, as we are now, though not on earth; Jude 6. 2 Pet. ii. 4. And they that overcame and are confirmed rejoice in our victory and confirmation. It is not an uninhabited world which is above us, nor such as is beyond our capacity and hope. We are come to an innumerable company of angels, and to the spirits of the perfected just, who together have discreet quantity, or numerical difference, notwithstanding their happy union and communion.

IX. And Satan himself, though unwillingly, hath many ways helped my belief of our immortality, and future hopes.*

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Few men, I think, that observe themselves, have not at some time had experience of such inward temptations, as show that the author of them is an invincible enemy. All which tells us, 1. That there are individual spirits. 2. Yea, devils that seek man's misery. 3. And that by the way of sin, and consequently that a future happiness or misery must be expected by us all.

X. But the great and sure prognostics of our immortal happiness is from the renewing operations of the Spirit of holiness on the soul. 1. That such a renewing work there is, all true believers in some measure feel. 2. And that it is the earnest of heaven, is proved thus.

1. If it be a change of greatest benefit to a man. 2. And if heaven be the very sum and end of it. 3. And if it overcome all fleshy, worldly opposition. 4. And can be wrought by none but God. 5. And was before promised by Jesus Christ to all sound believers. 6. And is universally wrought in them all, either only,

* The particulars of this argument are omitted.—Ed.

or eminently above all others. 7. And was promised them as a pledge and earnest of glory; then it can be no less than such a pledge and earnest; but the former are all true, &c.

1. That the change is of grand importance unto man, appeareth in that it is the renovation of his mind, and will, and life. It repaireth his depraved faculties; it causeth man to live as man, who is degenerated to a life too like to brutes. By God's permitting many to live in blindness, wickedness, and confusion, and to be tormenters of themselves and one another, by temptations, injuries, wars, and cruelty, we the fuller see what it is that grace doth save men from, and what a difference it maketh in the world. Those that have lived unholy in their youth, do easily find the difference in themselves when they are renewed. But to them that have been piously inclined from their childhood, it is harder to discern the difference, unless they mark the case of others. If man be worth any thing, it is for the use that his faculties were made; and if he be not good for the knowledge, love, and service of his Creator, what is he good for? And certainly the generality of ungodly worldlings are undisposed to all such works as this, till the spirit of Christ effectually change them. Men are slaves to sin till Christ thus make them free; John viii. 32, 33, 36. Rom. vi. 18. Acts xxvi. 18. Rom. viii. 2. But where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty; 2 Cor. iii. 17. If the divine nature and image, and the love of God shed abroad on the heart, be not our excellency, health, and beauty, what is? And that which is born of the flesh is flesh, but that which is born of the Spirit is spirit; John iii. 6. Without Christ and his Spirit, we can do nothing. Our dead notions and reasons, when we see the truth, have not power to overcome temptations, nor to raise up man's soul to its original and end, nor to possess us with the love and joyful hopes of future blessedness. It were better for us to have no souls, than that those souls should be void of the Spirit of God.

2. And that heaven is the sum and end of all the Spirit's operations, appeareth in all that are truly conscious of them in themselves, and to them and others by all God's precepts, which the Spirit causeth us to obey, and the doctrine which it causeth us to believe, and by the description of all God's graces which he worketh in us. What is our knowledge and faith, but our knowledge and belief of heaven, as consisting in the glory and love of God there manifested, and as purchased by Christ, and given by his covenant? What is our hope but the hope of glory? See Heb. xi. 1. and throughout. 1 Pet. i. 3, 21. Heb. vi. 11, 18, 19. and iii. 6. Tit. ii. 13. and iii. 7. Col. i. 5, 23, 27. And through the Spirit, we wait for all this hope; Gal. v. 5. What is our love but a desire of communion with the blessed God initially here, and

perfectly hereafter? As the sum of Christ's gospel was, "Take up the cross, forsake all here, and follow me, and thou shalt have a reward in heaven;" Luke xiv. 26. 33. and xviii. 22, 23. And the consolation of his gospel is, "Rejoice, and be exceedingly glad, for great is your reward in heaven;" Matt. v. 11, 12. So the same is the sum of his Spirit's operations; for what he teacheth and commandeth, that he worketh. For he worketh by that word, and the impress must be like the signet, what arm soever set it on. He sendeth not his Spirit to make men craftier than others for this world, but to make them wiser for salvation, and to make them more heavenly and holy. For the children of this world are wiser in their generation than the children of light. Heavenliness is the Spirit's special work.

3. And in working this, it conquereth the inward undisposedness and averseness of a fleshly, wordly mind and will, and the customs of a carnal life; and the outward temptations of Satan, and all the allurements of the world. Christ first overcame the world, and teacheth and causeth us to overcome it; even its flatteries and its frowns: our faith is our victory. Whether this victory be easy, and any honor to the Spirit of Christ, let our experience of the wickedness of the ungodly world, and of our own weakness, and of our falls when the Spirit of God forsaketh us, be our informer.

4. And that none but God can do this work on the soul of man, both the knowledge of causes and experience prove. The most learned, wise, and holy teachers cannot, (as they confess and show;) the wisest and most loving parents cannot, and therefore must pray to him that can; the greatest princes cannot; evil angels neither can nor will. What good angels can do on the heart we know not; but we know that they do nothing, but as the obedient ministers of God. And (though we have some power on ourselves, yet) that we ourselves cannot do it; that we cannot quicken, illuminate, or sanctify ourselves, and that we have nothing but what we have received, conscience and experience fully tell us.

5. And that Christ promised this Spirit in a special measure to all true believers, that it should be in them his advocate, agent, seal, and mark, is yet visible in the gospel; yea, and in the former prophets; Isa. xlv. 34. Ezek. xxxvi. 26. and xxxvii. 14. Joel ii. 28, 29. Ezek. xi. 19. and xviii. 31. Eph. i. 13. John iii. 5. and iv. 23, 24. and vi. 63. and vii. 39. John i. 33. and xiv. 16. 26. Acts i. 5. 8 John xv. 26. and xvi. 7—9, &c. Indeed the Spirit here, and heaven hereafter, are the chief of all the promises of Christ.

6. And that this Spirit is given (not to hypocrites that abuse Christ, and do not seriously believe him, nor to mere pretending, nominal Christians, but) to all that sincerely believe the gospel, is

evident not only to themselves in certainty, (if they are in a condition to know themselves,) but to others in part by the effects; they have other ends, other affections, other lives, than the rest of mankind have; though their heavenly nature and design be the less discerned and honored in the world, because their chiefest difference is out of the sight of man, in the heart, and in their secret actions, and because their imperfections blemish them, and because the malignant world is by strangeness and enmity an incompetent judge; yet it is discernible to others, that they live upon the hopes of a better life, and their heavenly interest is it that overruleth all the adverse interests of this world, and that in order thereunto they live under the conduct of divine authority, and that God's will is highest and most prevalent with them, and that to obey and please him as far as they know it, is the greatest business of their lives, though ignorance and adverse flesh do make their holiness and obedience imperfect. The universal noise and opposition of the world against them, do show that men discern a very great difference, which error, and cross interests, and carnal inclinations, render displeasing to those who find them condemned by their heavenly designs and conversations.

But whether others discern it, or deny it, or detest it, the true believer is conscious of it in himself; even when he groaneth to be better, to believe, and trust, and love God more, and to have more of the heavenly life and comforts, those very desires signify another appetite and mind, than wordlings have; and even when his frailties and weaknesses make him doubt of his own sincerity, he would not change his governor, rule, or hopes, for all that the world can offer him. He hath the witness in himself, that there is in believers a sanctifying Spirit, calling up their minds to God and glory, and warring victoriously against the flesh; (1 John v. 9—11. Gal. v. 17. Rom. vii. Phil. iii. 7—15.) so that to will is present with them; and they love and delight in a holy conformity to their rule; and it is never so well and pleasant with them as when they can trust and love God most; and in their worst and weakest condition, they would fain be perfect. This Spirit and its renewing work, so greatly different from the temper and desires of worldly men, is given by Christ to all sound believers.

It is true, that some that know not of an incarnate Savior, have much in them that is very laudable; whether it be real saving holiness, and whether Abraham were erroneous in thinking that even the Sodom of the world were likely to have had fifty righteous persons in them, I am not now to inquire: but it is sure, 1. That the world had really a Savior about four thousand years before Christ's incarnation; even the God of pardoning mercy, who promised and undertook what after was performed, and shall be to the end, 2,

And that the Spirit of this Savior did sanctify God's elect from the beginning; and gave them the same holy and heavenly dispositions (in some degree) before Christ's incarnation as is given since; yea, it is called "The Spirit of Christ," which was before given; 1 Pet. i. 11. 3. That this Spirit was then given to more than the Jews. 4. That Christ hath put that part of the world that hear not of his incarnation into no worse a condition than he found them in: that as the Jews' covenant of peculiarity was no repeal of the universal law of grace, made by God with fallen mankind, in Adam and Noah; so the covenant of grace of the second edition, made with Christ's peculiar people, is no repeal of the foresaid law in the first edition, to them that hear not of the second. 5. That all that wisdom and goodness, that is in any without the Christian church, is the work of the Spirit of the Redeemer; as the light which goeth before sun-rising, and after sun-setting, and in a cloudy day, is of the same sun which others see, even to them that see not the sun itself. 6. That the liker any without the church are to the sanctified believers, the better they are, and the more unlike the worse; so that all these six things being undeniable, it appeareth, that it is the same Spirit of Christ, which now giveth all men what real goodness is any where to be found. But it is notorious that no part of the world is, in heavenliness and virtue, comparable to true and serious Christians.

7. And let it be added, that Christ, (Eph. i. 14. 2 Cor i. 22 and v. 5. Rom. viii. 23. 2 Tim. ii. 19. Eph. i. 13. and iv. 30. 1 John v. 9, 10. Heb. x. 15.) who promised the greatest measures of the Spirit, (which he accordingly hath given,) did expressly promise this, as a means and pledge, first fruits, and earnest, of the heavenly glory; and, therefore, it is a certain proof, that such a glory we shall have. He that can and doth give us a spiritual change or renovation, which in its nature and tendency is heavenly, and sets our hopes and hearts on heaven, and turneth the endeavors of our lives to the seeking of a future blessedness, and told us, beforehand, that he would give us this preparatory grace, as the earnest of that felicity, may well be trusted to perform his word in our actual glorification.

And now, O weak and fearful soul! why shouldest thou draw back, as if the case were yet left doubtful? Is not thy foundation firm? Is not the way of life, through the valley of death, made safe by him that conquereth death? Art thou not yet delivered from the bondage of thy fears, when the gaoler and executioner, who had the power of death, hath by Christ been put out of his power, as to thee? Is not all this evidence true and sure? Hast thou not the witness in thyself? Hast thou not scund the motions, the effectual operations, the renewing changes, of this Spirit in thee

long ago? And is he not still the agent and witness of Christ, residing and operating in thee? Whence else are thy groanings after God; thy desires to be nearer to his glory; to know him better; to love him more? Whence came all the pleasure thou hast had in his sacred truth, and ways, and service? Who else overcame thy folly, and pride, and vain desires, so far as they are overcome? Who made it thy choice to sit at the feet of Christ, and hear his word, as the better part, and to despise the honors and preferments of the world, and to account them all as dung and dross? Who breathed in thee all those requests that thou hast sent up to God? Overvalue not corrupted nature; it bringeth not forth such fruits as these: if thou doubt of that, remember what thou wast in the hour of temptation, even of poor and weak temptations. And how small a matter hath drawn thee to sin, when God did but leave thee to thyself. Forget not the days of youthful vanity: overlook not the case of the miserable world, even of thy sinful neighbors, who, in the midst of light, still live in darkness, and hear not the loudest calls of God: look about on thousands that, in the same land, and under the same teaching, and after the greatest judgment and deliverance, run on to all excess of riot, and, as past feeling, as greedily vicious and unclean. Is it no work of Christ's Spirit that hath made thee to differ? Thou hast nothing to boast of, and much to be humbled for; but thou hast also much to be thankful for. Thy holy desires are, alas! too weak; but they are holy: thy love hath been too cold; but it is holiness, and the most holy God, that thou hast loved. Thy hopes in God have been too low; but it is God thou hast hoped in, and his love and glory thou hast hoped for. Thy prayers have been too dull and interrupted; but it is holiness and heaven that thou hast most prayed for. Thy labors and endeavors have been too slothful; but it is God, and glory, and the good of mankind, that thou hast labored for. Though thy motion were too weak and slow, it hath been Godward; and, therefore, it was from God. O bless the Lord, that hath not only given thee a word that beareth the image of God, and is sealed by uncontrolled miracles, to be the matter of thy belief, but hath also fulfilled his promises so oft and notably to thee, in the answer of prayers, and in great and convincing deliverances of thyself and many others; and hath, by wonders, oft assisted thy faith! Bless that God of light and love, who, besides the universal attestation of his word, long ago given to all the church, hath given thee the internal seal, the nearer in-dwelling attestation, the effects of power, light, and love, imprinted on thy nature, mind, and will, the witness in thyself, that the word of God is not a human dream, or lifeless thing; that by regeneration hath been here preparing thee for the light of glory, as by generation he pre-

pared thee to see this light, and converse with men. And wilt thou yet doubt and fear against all this evidence, experience and foretaste?

I think it not needless labor to confirm my soul in the full persuasion of the truth of its own immortal nature, and of a future life of joy or misery to mankind, and of the certain truth of the Christian faith: the being of God, and his perfection, hath so great evidence, that I find no great temptation to doubt of it, any more than whether there be an earth, or a sun; and the atheist seemeth to me to be in that no better than mad. The Christian verity is known only by supernatural revelation; but by such revelation it is so attested externally to the world, and internally to holy souls, as maketh faith the ruling, victorious, consolatory principle, by which we must live and not by sight; but the soul's immortality and reward hereafter is of a middle nature, viz. of natural revelation, but incomparably less clear than the being of a God; and therefore, by the addition of evangelical (supernatural) revelation, is made to us much more clear and sure. And I find, among the infidels of this age, that most who deny the Christian verity, do almost as much deny or question the retribution of a future life. And they that are fully satisfied of this, do find Christianity so excellently congruous to it, as greatly facilitateth the work of faith. Therefore, I think that there is scarce any verity more needful to be thoroughly digested into a full assurance, than this of the soul's immortality, and hope of future happiness.

And when I consider the great unlikeness of men's hearts and lives to such a belief as we all profess, I cannot but fear, that not only the ungodly, but most that truly hope for glory, have a far weaker belief (in habit and act) of the soul's immortality, and the truth of the gospel, than they seem to take notice of in themselves. Can I be certain, or fully persuaded, (in habit and act,) of the future rewards and punishments of souls, and that we shall be all shortly judged as we have lived here, and yet not despise all the vanities of this world, and set my heart, with resolution and diligence, to the preparation which must be made by a holy, heavenly, fruitful life, as one whose soul is taken up with the hopes and fear of things of such unspeakable importance? Who could stand dallying, as most men do, at the door of eternity, that did verily believe his immortal soul must be shortly there? Though such an one had no certainty of his own particular title to salvation, the certainty of such a grand concernment (that joy or misery is at hand) would surely awaken him to try, cry, or search; to beg, to strive, to watch, to spare no care, or cost, or labor, to make all sure in a matter of such weight; it could not be but he would do it with speed, and do it with a full resolved soul, and do it with earnest zeal and diligence.

What man that once saw the things which we hear of, even heaven and hell, would not afterwards (at least in deep regard and seriousness) exceed the most resolved believer that you know. One would think, in reason, it should be so thought : I confess a wicked heart is very senseless.

I do confess, that there is much weakness of the belief of things unseen, where yet there is sincerity ; but surely there will be some proportion between our belief and its effects. And where there is little regard, or fear, or hopes, or sorrow, or joy, or resolved diligence for the world to come, I must think that there is (in act at least) but little belief of it, and that such persons little know themselves, how much they secretly doubt, whether it be true. I know that most complain, almost altogether, of the uncertainty of their title to salvation, and little of their uncertainty of a heaven and hell ; but were they more certain of this, and truly persuaded of it at the heart, it would do more to bring them to that serious, resolved faithfulness in religion, which would help them more easily to be sure of their sincerity, than long examinations, and many marks talked of, without this, will do.

And I confess, that the great wisdom of God hath not thought meet, that in the body we should have as clear, and sensible, and lively apprehensions of heaven and hell, as sight would cause. For that would be to have too much of heaven or hell on earth ; for the gust would follow the perception, and so full a sense would be some sort of a possession, which we are not fit for in this world. And, therefore, it must be a darker revelation than sight would be, that it may be a lower perception, lest this world and the next should be confounded ; and faith and reason should be put out of office, and not duly tried, exercised, and fitted for reward ; but yet faith is faith, and knowledge is knowledge ; and he that verily believeth such great, transcendent things, though he see them not, will have some proportionable affections and endeavors.

I confess also, that man's soul, in flesh, is not fit to bear so deep a sense of heaven and hell as sight would cause ; because it here operateth on and with the body, and according to its capacity, which cannot bear so deep a sense without distraction, by screwing up the organs too high, till they break, and so overdoing, would undo all ; but yet there is an overruling seriousness, which a certain belief of future things must needs bring the soul to, that truly hath it : and he that is careful and serious for this world, and looketh after a better, but with a slight, unwilling, half-regard, and, in the second place, must give me leave to think, that he believeth but as he liveth, and that his doubting, or unbelief, of the reality of a heaven and hell, is greater than his belief.

O, then, for what should my soul more pray than for a clearer

and stronger faith? I believe; Lord, help my unbelief! I have many a thousand times groaned to thee under the burden of this remnant of darkness and unbelief; I have many a thousand times thought of the evidences of the Christian verity, and of the great necessity of a lively, powerful, active faith: I have begged it; I have cried to thee night and day, Lord, increase my faith! I have written and spoken that to others which might be most useful to myself, to raise the apprehensions of faith yet higher, and make them liker those of sense; but yet, yet, Lord, how dark is this world! What a dungeon is this flesh! How little clearer is my sight, and little quicker are my perceptions, of unseen things, than long ago! Am I at the highest that man on earth can reach, and that when I am so dark and low? Is there no growth of these apprehensions more to be expected? Doth the soul cease its increase in vigorous perception, when the body ceaseth its increase, or vigor, of sensation? Must I sit down in so low a measure, while I am drawing nearer to the things believed, and am almost there, where belief must pass into sight and love? Or, must I take up with the passive silence and inactivity, which some friars persuade us is nearer to perfection; and, under pretense of annihilation and receptivity, let my sluggish heart alone, and say, that in this neglect I wait for thy operations? O let not a soul, that is driven from this world, and weary of vanity, and can think of little else but immortality, that seeks and cries both night and day for the heavenly light, and fain would have some foretaste of glory, and some more of the first-fruits of the promised joys,—let not such a soul either long, or cry, or strive in vain! Punish not my former grieving of thy Spirit, by deserting a soul that crieth for thy grace, so near its great and inconceivable change. Let me not languish in vain desires at the door of hope; nor pass with doubtful thoughts and fears from this vale of misery. Which should be the season of triumphant faith, and hope, and joy, if not when I am entering on the world of joy? O thou that hast left us so many consolatory words of promise, that our joy may be full, send, O! send the promised Comforter, without whose approaches and heavenly beams, when all is said, and a thousand thoughts and strivings have been essayed, it will still be night and winter with the soul.

But have I not expected more particular and more sensitive conceptions of heaven, and the state of blessed souls, than I should have done, and remained less satisfied, because I expected such distinct perceptions to my satisfaction, which God doth not ordinarily give to souls in flesh? I fear it hath been too much so; a distrust of God, and a distrustful desire to know much (good and evil) for ourselves, as necessary to our quiet and satisfaction, was that sin which hath deeply corrupted man's nature, and is more of

our common pravity, than is commonly observed. I find that this distrust of God, and my Redeemer, hath had too great a hand in my desires of a distincter and more sensible knowledge. I know that I should implicitly, and absolutely, and quietly, trust my soul into my Redeemer's hands; (of which I must speak more anon;) and it is not only for the body, but also for the soul, that a distrustful care is our great sin and misery. But yet we must desire that our knowledge and belief may be as distinct and particular as God's revelations are; and we can love no further than we know; and the more we know of God and glory, the more we shall love, desire and trust him. It is a known, and not merely an unknown God and happiness, that the soul doth joyfully desire; and if I may not be ambitious of too sensible and distinct perceptions here, of the things unseen; yet must I desire and beg the most fervent and sensible love to them that I am capable of. I am willing (in part) to take up with that unavoidable ignorance, and that low degree of such knowledge, which God confineth us to in the flesh, so be it he will give me but such consolatory foretastes in love and joy, which such a general, imperfect knowledge may consist with, that my soul may not pass with distrust and terror, but with suitable, triumphant hopes, to the everlasting pleasures.

O Father of lights! who givest wisdom to them that ask it of thee, shut not up this sinful soul in darkness! leave me not to grope in unsatisfied doubts, at the door of the celestial light! or, if my knowledge must be general, let it be clear and powerful; and deny me not now the lively exercise of faith, hope, and love, which are the stirrings of the new creature, and the dawns of the everlasting light, and the earnest of the promised inheritance.

But we are oft ready to say with Cicero, when he had been reading such as Plato, that, while the book is in our hands, we seem confident of our immortality, and when we lay it by, our doubts return; so our arguments seem clear and cogent, and yet when we think not of them, with the best advantage, we are oft surprised with fear, lest we should be mistaken, and our hopes be vain; and hereupon (and from the common fear of death, that even good men too often manifest) the infidels gather, that we do but force ourselves into such a hope as we desire to be true, against the tendency of man's nature, and that we were not made for a better world.

But this fallacy ariseth from men's not distinguishing, 1. Sensitive fears from rational uncertainty, or doubts. 2. And the mind that is in the darkness of unbelief, from that which hath the light of faith.

I find in myself too much of fear, when I look into eternity, interrupting and weakening my desires and joy. But I find that it is

very much an irrational, sensitive fear, which the darkness of man's mind, the greatness of the change, the dreadful majesty of God, and man's natural averseness to die, do, in some degree, necessitate, even when reason is fully satisfied that such fears are consistent with certain safety. If I were bound with the strongest chains, or stood on the surest battlements, on the top of a castle or steeple, I could not possibly look down without fear, and such as would go near to overcome me ; and yet I should be rationally sure that I am there fast and safe, and cannot fall. So is it with our prospect into the life to come : fear is oft a necessitated passion : when a man is certain of his safe foundation, it will violently rob him of the comfort of that certainty : yea, it is a passion that irrationally doth much to corrupt our reason itself, and would make us doubt because we fear, though we know not why : and a fearful man doth hardly trust his own apprehensions of his safety, but, among other fears, is still ready to fear lest he be deceived ; like timorous, melancholy persons about their bodies, who are ready still to think that every little distemper is a mortal symptom, and that worse is still nearer them than they feel, and they hardly believe any words of hope.

And Satan, knowing the power of these passions, and having easier access to the sensitive than to the intellectual faculties, doth labor to get in at this back door, and to frighten poor souls into doubt and unbelief : and in timorous natures he doth it with too great success, as to the consolatory acts of faith. Though yet God's mercy is wonderfully seen in preserving many honest, tender souls from the damning part of unbelief, and, by their fears, preserveth them from being bold with sin ; when many bold and impudent sinners turn infidels, or atheists, by forfeiting the helps of grace.

And, indeed, irrational fears have so much power to raise doubts, that they are seldom separated ; insomuch that many scarce know, or observe, the difference between doubts and fears ; and many say they not only fear but doubt, when they can scarce tell why, as if it were no intellectual act which they meant, but an irrational passion.

If, therefore, my soul see undeniable evidence of immortality ; and if it be able, by irrefragable argument, to prove the future blessedness expected ; and if it be convinced that God's promises are true, and sufficiently sealed and attested by him, to warrant the most confident belief ; and if I trust my soul and all my hopes upon this word, and evidences of truth,—it is not, then, our averseness to die, nor the sensible fears of a soul that looketh into eternity, that invalidate any of the reasons of my hope, nor prove the unsoundness of my faith.

But yet these fears do prove its weakness ; and were they prev-

alent against the choice, obedience, resolutions, and endeavors of faith, they would be prevalent against the truth of faith, or prove its nullity ; for faith is trust ; and trust is a securing, quieting thing. "Why are ye fearful, O ye of little faith ?" was a just reproof of Christ to his disciples, when sensible dangers raised up their fears, For the established will hath a political or imperfect, though not a despotical and absolute, power over our passions. And therefore our fears do show our unbelief, and stronger faith is the best means of conquering even irrational fears. "Why art thou cast down, O my soul, and why art thou so disquieted in me ? trust in God," &c. (Psalm xlii.) is a needful way of ohiding a timorous heart.

And though many say that faith hath not evidence, and think that it is an assent of the mind, merely commanded by the empire of the will, without a knowledge of the verity of the testimony, yet, certainly, the same assent is ordinarily in the Scriptures called, indifferently, knowing and believing : and as a bare command will not cause love, unless we perceive an amiableness in the object, so a bare command of the law, or of the will, cannot alone cause belief, unless we perceive a truth in the testimony believed ; for it is a contradiction, or an act without its object. And truth is perceived only so far as it is some way evident ; for evidence is nothing but the objective perceptibility of truth, or that which is metaphorically called light. So that we must say that faith hath not sensible evidence of the invisible things believed ; but faith is nothing else but the willing perception of the evidence of truth in the word of the assertor, and a trust therein. We have, and must have, evidence that Scripture is God's word, and that his word is true, before, by any command of the word or will, we can believe it.

I do, therefore, neither despise evidence as unnecessary, nor trust to it alone as the sufficient total cause of my belief ; for if God's grace do not open mine eyes, and come down in power upon my will, and insinuate into it a sweet acquaintance with the things unseen, and a taste of their goodness to delight my soul, no reasons will serve to stablish and comfort me, how undeniable soever : reason is fain first to make use of notions, words, or signs ; and to know terms, propositions, and arguments, which are but means to the knowledge of things, is its first employment, and that, alas ! which multitudes of learned men do take up with : but it is the illumination of God that must give us an effectual acquaintance with the things spiritual and invisible, which these notions signify, and to which our organical knowledge is but a means.

To sum up all, that our hopes of heaven have a certain ground, appeareth, I. From nature : II. From grace : III. From other works of gracious providence.

I. i. From the nature of man: 1. Made capable of it. 2. Obligated, even by the law of nature, to seek it before all. 3. Naturally desiring perfection, (1.) Habitual: (2.) Active: and, (3.) Objective.

ii. And from the nature of God, 1. As good and communicative. 2. As holy and righteous. 3. As wise; making none of his works in vain.

II. From grace, 1. Purchasing it. 2. Declaring it by a messenger from heaven, both by word and by Christ's own (and others') resurrection. 3. Promising it. 4. Sealing that promise by miracles there. 5. And by the work of sanctification, to the end of the world.

III. By subordinate providence. 1. God's actual governing the world by the hopes and fears of another life. 2. The many helps which he giveth us for a heavenly life, and for attaining it, (which are not vain.) 3. Specially the ministration of angels, and their love to us, and communion with us. 4. And, by accident, devils themselves convince us. (1.) By the nature of their temptations, (2.) &c. * * *

Being with Christ.

Having proved that faith and hope have a certain, future happiness to expect, the text directeth me next to consider why it is described by "being with Christ;" viz. I. What is included in our "being with Christ." II. That we shall be with him. III. Why we shall be with him.

To be with Christ includeth, I. Presence. II. Union. III. Communion, or participation of felicity with him.

I. *Quest.* Is it Christ's Godhead, or his human soul, or his human body, that we shall be present with, and united to, or all? *Answ.* It is all, but variously.

1. We shall be present with the divine nature of Christ. *Quest.* But are we not always so? And are not all creatures so? *Answ.* Yes, as his essence comprehendeth all place and beings; but not as it is operative, and manifested in and by his glory. Christ directeth our hearts and tongues to pray, "Our Father, which art in heaven;" and yet he knew that all place is in and with God; because it is in heaven that he gloriously operateth and shineth forth to holy souls; even as man's soul is eminently said to be in the head, because it understandeth and reasoneth in the head, and not in the foot or hand, though it be also there. And as we look a man in the face when we talk to him, so we look up to heaven when we pray to God. God who is, and operateth as, the root of nature, in all the works of creation, (for in him we live, and move, and are,) and

by the way of grace in all the gracious, doth operate, and is, by the works and splendor of his glory, eminently in heaven; by which glory, therefore, we must mean some created glory; for his essence hath no inequality.

2. We shall be present with the human nature of Christ, both soul and body: but here our present narrow thoughts must not too boldly presume to resolve the difficulties which, to a distinct understanding of this, should be overcome; for we must not here expect any more than a dark and general knowledge of them; as, 1. What is the formal difference between Christ's glorified body and his flesh on earth? 2. Where Christ's glorified body is, and how far it extendeth. 3. Wherein the soul and the glorified body differ, seeing it is called a spiritual body: these things are beyond our present reach.

(1.) For what conceptions can we have of a spiritual body, save that it is pure, incorruptible, invisible to mortal eyes, and fitted to the most perfect state of the soul? How near the nature of it is to a spirit, (and so to the soul,) and how far they agree, or differ, in substance, extensiveness, divisibility, or activity, little do we know.

(2.) Nor do we know where and how far Christ's body is present by extent. The sun is commonly taken for a body, and its motive, illuminative, and calefactive beams, are, by the most probable philosophy, taken to be a real emanant part of its substance, and so that it is essentially as extensive as those beams; that is, it at once filleth all our air, and toucheth the surface of the earth; and how much further it extendeth we cannot tell. And what difference there is between Christ's glorified body and the sun, in purity, splendor, extent, or excellency of nature, little do poor mortals know: and so of the rest.

Let no man, therefore, cavil, and say, 'How can a whole world of glorified bodies be all present with the one body of Christ, when each must possess its proper room?' for as the body of the solar beams, and the extensive air, are so compresent, as that none can discern the difference of the places which they possess, and a world of bodies are present with them both, so may all our bodies be with Christ's body, and that without any real confusion.

II. Besides presence with Christ, there will be such an union as we cannot now distinctly know. A political, relative union is, past doubt, such as subjects have in one kingdom with their king; but little know we how much more. We see that there is a wonderful corporeal continuity, or contact, among the material works of God; and the more spiritual, pure, and noble, the more inclination each nature hath to union. Every plant on earth hath an union with the whole earth in which it liveth: they are real parts

of it. And what natural conjunction our bodies shall have to Christ's, and what influence from it, is past our knowledge. Though his similitudes in John xv. and vi. and Eph. v. and 1 Cor. xii. seem to extend far, yet, being but similitudes, we cannot fully know how far.

The same, *variatis variandis*, we may say of our union with Christ's human soul. Seeing souls are more inclinable to union than bodies, when we see all vegetables to be united parts of one earth, and yet to have each one its proper individuating form and matter, we cannot, though animals seem to walk more disjunct, imagine that there is no kind of union or conjunction of invisible souls; though they retain their several substances and forms; nor yet that our bodies shall have a nearer union with Christ's body than our souls with his soul. But the nature, manner, and measure of it, we know not.

Far be it from us to think that Christ's glorified, spiritual body, is such in forms, parts, and dimensions, as his earthly body was. That it hath hands, feet, brains, heart, stomach, liver, intestines, as on earth; or that it is such a compound of earth, water, and air, as here it was, and of such confined extent; for then, as his disciples and a few Jews only were present with him, and all the world besides were absent, and had none of his company, so it would be in heaven. But it is such as not only Paul, but all true believers in the world, from the creation to the end, shall be with Christ and see his glory: and though inequality of fitness, or degrees of holiness, will make an inequality of glory, no man can prove an inequality, by local distance, from Christ; or, if such there be,—for it is beyond our reach,—yet none in heaven are at such a distance from him as not to enjoy the felicity of his presence.

Therefore, when we dispute against them that hold transubstantiation, and the ubiquity of Christ's body, we do assuredly conclude that sense is judge, whether there be real bread and wine present or not; but it is no judge, whether Christ's spiritual body be present or not, no more than whether an angel be present. And we conclude that Christ's body is not infinite, or immense, as is his Godhead; but what are its dimensions, limits, or extent, and where it is absent, far be it from us to determine, when we cannot tell how far the sun extendeth its secondary substance, or emanant beams; nor well what locality is as to Christ's soul, or any spirit, if to a spiritual body.

Their fear is vain and carnal, who are afraid lest their union with Christ, or one another, will be too near; even lest thereby they lose their individuation, as rivers that fall into the sea, or extinguished candles, whose fire is after but a sunbeam, or part of the common element of fire in the air, or as the vegetative spirits

which, in autumn, retire from the leaves into the branches and trunk of the tree. I have proved before, that our individuation, or numerical existence, ceaseth not; and that no union is to be feared, were it never so sure, which destroyeth not the being, or formal powers, or action of the soul; and that it is the great radical disease of selfishness, and want of holy love to God and our Savior, and one another, which causeth these unreasonable fears, even that selfishness which now maketh men so partially desirous of their own wills and pleasure in comparison of God's, and their own felicity in comparison of others, and which maketh them so easily bear God's injuries, and the sufferings of a thousand others, in comparison of their own. But he that put a great desire of the body's preservation into the soul, while it is its form, will abate that desire when the time of separation is come, because there is then no use for it till the resurrection; else it would be a torment to the soul.

III. And as we shall have union, so also communion, with the divine and human nature of Christ respectively; both, 1. As they will be the objects of our soul's most noble and constant acts, and, 2. As they will be the fountain or communicative cause of our receptions.

1. We find now that our various faculties have various objects, suitable to their natures. The objects of sense are things sensible, and the objects of imagination, things imaginable, and the objects of intellection, things intelligible, and the objects of the will, things amiable. The eye, which is a nobler sense than some others, hath light for its object, which, to other senses, is none; and so of the rest. Therefore, we have cause to suppose, that as far as our glorified souls, and our spiritual glorified bodies, will differ, so far Christ's glorified soul and body will, respectively, be their several objects; and beholding the glory of both will be part of our glory.

Yet it is not hence to be gathered, that the separated soul, before the resurrection, shall not have Christ's glorified body for its object; for the objects of the body are also the objects of the soul, or, to speak more properly, the objects of sense are also the objects of intellection and will, though all the objects of the intellect and will are not objects of sense. The separated soul can know Christ's glorified body, though our present bodies cannot see a soul. But how much our spiritual bodies will excel in capacity and activity these passive bodies, that have so much earth and water, we cannot tell.

And though now our souls are as a candle in a lantern, and must have extrinsic objects admitted by the senses before they can be understood, yet it followeth not that therefore a separated soul cannot know such objects: 1. Because it now knoweth them ab-

structively, per species, because its act of ratiocination is compound as to the cause, (soul and body.) But it will then know such things intuitively, as now it can do itself, when then the lantern is cast by. 2. And whatever many of late, that have given themselves the title of ingenious, have said to the contrary, we have little reason to think that the sensitive faculty is not an essential, inseparable power of the same soul that is intellectual, and that sensation ceaseth to separated souls, however the modes of it may cease with their several uses and organs. To feel intellectually, or to understand and will feelingly, we have cause to think, will be the action of separated souls; and if so, why may they not have communion with Christ's body and soul, as their objects in their separated state? 3. Besides that, we are uncertain whether the separated soul have no vehicle or body at all. Things unknown to us must not be supposed true or false. Some think that the sensitive soul is material, and, as a body to the intellectual, never separated. I am not of their opinion that make them two substances; but I cannot say I am certain that they err. Some think that the soul is material, of a purer substance than things visible, and that the common notion of its substantiality meaneth nothing else but a pure, (as they call it,) spiritual materiality. Thus thought not only Tertullian, but almost all the old Greek doctors of the church that write of it, and most of the Latin, or very many, as I have elsewhere showed, and as Faustus reciteth them in the treatise answered by Mammertus. Some think that the soul, as vegetative, is an igneous body, such as we call ether, or solar fire, or rather of a higher, purer kind; and that sensation and intellection are those formal faculties which specifically difference it from inferior mere fire or ether. There were few of the old doctors, that thought it not some of these ways material; and, consequently, extensive and divisible *per potentiam divinam*, though not naturally, or of its own inclination, because most strongly inclined to unity: and if any of all these uncertain opinions should prove true, the objections in hand will find no place. To say nothing of their conceit, who say, that as the spirit that retireth from the falling leaves in autumn, continueth to animate the tree, so man's soul may do, when departed, with that to which it is united, to animate some more noble, universal body. But as all these are the too bold cogitations of men that had better let unknown things alone, so yet they may be mentioned to rehell that more perilous boldness which denieth the soul's action, which is certain, upon, at best, uncertain reasons.

I may boldly conclude, notwithstanding such objections, that Christ's divine and human nature, soul and body, shall be the felicitating objects of intuition and holy love to the separated soul be-

fore the resurrection ; and that to be with Christ is to have such communion with him, and not only to be present where he is.

2. And the chief part of this communion will be that in which we are receptive ; even Christ's communications to the soul. And as the infinite, incomprehensible Deity is the root, or first cause, of all communication, natural, gracious, and glorious, to being, motion, life, rule, reason, holiness, and happiness ; and the whole creation is more dependent on God, than the fruit on the tree, or the plants on the earth, or the members on the body ; (though yet they are not parts of the Deity, nor deified, because the communication is creative ;) so God useth second causes in his communication to inferior natures. And it is more than probable, that the human soul of Christ, primarily, and his body, secondarily, are the chief second cause of influence and communication both of grace and glory, both to man in the body, and to the separated soul. And as the sun is first an efficient, communicative, second cause of seeing to the eye, and then is also the object of our sight, so Christ is to the soul.* For as God, so the Lamb is the light and glory of the heavenly Jerusalem, and in his light we shall have light. Though he give up the kingdom to the Father, so far as that God shall be all in all, and his creature be fully restored to his favor, and there shall be need of a healing government no more, for the recovering of lapsed souls to God ; yet sure he will not cease to be our Mediator, and to be the church's head, and to be the conveying cause of everlasting life, and light, and love, to all his members. As now we live because he liveth, even as the branches in the vine, and the Spirit that quickeneth, enlighteneth, and sanctifieth us, is first the Spirit of Christ before it is ours, and is communicated from God, by him, to us ; so will it be in the state of glory ; for we shall have our union and communion with him perfected, and not destroyed or diminished. And unless I could be so proud as to think that I am, or shall be, the most excellent of all the creatures of God, and therefore nearest him, and above all others, how could I think that I am under the influence of no second cause, but have either grace or glory from God alone ?

So far am I from such arrogancy, as to think I shall be so near to God, as to be above the need and use of Christ and his communications, as that I dare not say that I shall be above the need and help of other subordinate causes : as I am now lower than angels, and need their help, and as I am under the government of

* This one truth will give great light into the controversies about God's gracious operations on the soul ; for when he useth second causes, we see he operateth according to their limited aptitude ; and Christ's human nature, and all other second causes, are limited, and operate variously and resistibly, according to the recipient's capacity.

my superiors; and, as a poor, weak member, am little worth in comparison of the whole body, the church of Christ, and receive continual help from the whole, so, how far it will be thus in glory I know not; but that God will still use second causes for our joy, I doubt not, and also that there will not be an equality; and that it will be consistent with God's all-sufficiency to us, and our felicity in him, that we shall forever have use for one another, and that to sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of God, and to be in Abraham's bosom, and to sit at Christ's right and left hand, in his kingdom, and to be ruler over ten cities, and to join with the heavenly host or choir, in the joyful love and praise of God, and of the Lamb, and many such like, are not false nor useless notes and notions of our celestial glory.

And, certainly, if I be with Christ, I shall be with all that are with Christ; even with all the heavenly society. Though these bodies of gross, passive matter must have so much room, that the earth is little enough for all its inhabitants; and those at the antipodes are almost as strange to us as if they were in another world; and those of another kingdom, another province, or county, and oft another parish, yea, another house, are strangers to us; so narrow is our capacity of communion here. Yet we have great cause to think, by many Scripture expressions, that our heavenly union and communion will be nearer and more extensive; and that all the glorified shall know each other, or, at least, be far less distant and less strange than now we are. As I said before, when I see how far the sunbeams do extend, how they penetrate our closest glass, and puzzle them that say, that all bodies are impenetrable; when I see how little they hinder the placing or presence of other creatures, and how intimately they mix themselves with all, and seem to possess the whole region of the air, when yet the air seemeth itself to fill it, &c., I dare not think that glorified spirits (no, nor spiritual bodies) will be such strangers to one another as we are here on earth.

And I must needs say, that it is a pleasant thought to me, and greatly helpeth my willingness to die, to think that I shall go to all the holy ones, both Christ and angels, and departed, blessed souls. For, 1. God hath convinced me that they are better than I, (each singly,) and therefore more amiable than myself. 2. And that many are better than one, and the whole than a poor, sinful part, and the New Jerusalem is the glory of the creation. 3. God hath given me a love to all his holy ones, as such. 4. And a love to the work of love and praise, which they continually and perfectly perform to God. 5. And a love to the celestial Jerusalem, as it is complete, and to his glory shining in them. 6. And my old acquaintance with many a holy person gone to Christ,

doth make my thoughts of heaven the more familiar to me. O, how many of them could I name! 7. And it is no small encouragement to one that is to enter upon an unseen world, to think that he goeth not an untrodden path, nor enters into a solitary or singular state; but followeth all from the creation to this day, that have passed by death to endless life. And is it not an emboldening consideration, to think that I am to go no other way, nor to no other place or state, than all the believers and saints have gone to before me, from the beginning to this time? Of this more anon.

To depart.

But I must be loosed or depart, before I can thus be with Christ. And I must here consider, *I.* From what I must depart. *II.* And how, or in what manner: and I must not refuse to know the worst.

I. And, 1. I know that I must depart from this body itself, and the life which consisteth in the animating of it. These eyes must here see no more; this hand must move no more; these feet must walk no more; this tongue must speak no more. As much as I have loved and over-loved this body, I must leave it to the grave. There must it lie and rot in darkness, as a neglected and a loathed thing.

This is the fruit of sin, and nature would not have it so: I mean the nature of this compound man; but what, though it be so? 1. It is but my shell, or tabernacle, and the clothing of my soul, and not itself. 2. It is but an elementary composition dissolved; and earth going to earth, and water to water, and air to air, and fire to fire, into that union which the elementary nature doth incline it.

3. It is but an instrument laid by when all its work is done, and a servant dismissed when his service is at an end. And what should I do with a horse when I shall need to ride or travel no more, or with a pen, when I must write no more? It is but the laying by the passive receiver of my soul's operations, when the soul hath no more to do upon it; as I cast by my lute or other instrument, when I have better employment than music to take up my time.

4. Or, at most, it is but as flowers die in the fall, and plants in winter, when the retiring spirits have done their work, and are undisposed to dwell in so cold and unmeet a habitation, as the season maketh their former matter then to be. And its retirement is not its annihilation, but its taking up a fitter place.

5. It is but a separation from a troublesome companion, and putting off a shoe that pinched me; many a sad and painful hour I have had in this frail and faltering flesh; many a weary night and

day: what cares, what fears, what griefs, and what groans, hath this body cost me! Alas! how many hours of my precious time have been spent to maintain it, please it, or repair it! How considerable a part of all my life hath been spent in necessary sleep and rest; and how much in eating, drinking, dressing, physic; and how much in laboring, or using means, to procure these and other necessities! Many a hundred times I have thought, that it costeth me so dear to live, yea, to live a painful, weary life, that were it not for the work and higher ends of life, I had little reason to be much in love with it, or to be loath to leave it. And had not God put into our nature itself a necessary, unavoidable, sensitive love of the body, and of life, as he puts into the mother, and into every brute, a love of their young ones, how unclean, and impotent, and troublesome soever, for the propagation and continuance of man on earth? Had God but left it to mere reason, without this necessary preëngagement of our natures, it would have been a matter of more doubt and difficulty than it is, whether this life should be loved and desired; and no small number would daily wish that they had never been born; a wish that I have had much ado to forbear, even when I have known that it is sinful, and when the work and pleasure of my life have been such to overcome the evils of it as few have had.

6. Yea, to depart from such a body, is but to be removed from a foul, uncleanly, and sordid habitation. I know that the body of man and brutes is the curious, wonderful work of God, and not to be despised, nor injuriously dishonored, but admired and well used; but yet it is a wonder to our reason, that so noble a spirit should be so meanly housed; and we may call it "our vile body," as the apostle doth; Phil. iii. 21. It is made up of the airy, watery, and earthly parts of our daily food, subacted and actuated by the fiery part, as the instrument of the soul. The greater part of the same food which, with great cost, and pomp, and pleasure, is first upon our tables, and then in our mouths, to-day, is to-morrow a fetid, loathsome excrement, and cast out into the draught, that the sight and smell of that annoy us not, which yesterday was the sumptuous fruit of our abundance, and the glory of that which is called great housekeeping, and the pleasure of our eyes and taste. And is not the rest that turneth into blood and flesh, of the same general kind with that which is turned into loathsome filth? The difference is, that it is fitter for the soul by the fiery spirits, yet longer to operate on and keep from corruption; our blood and flesh are as stinking and loathsome a substance as our filthiest excrements, save that they are longer kept from putrefaction. Why then should it more grieve me, that one part of my food, which turneth into flesh, should rot and stink in the

grave, than that all the rest should daily stink in the draught? Yea, while it is within me, were it not covered from my sight, what a loathsome mass would my intestines appear! If I saw what is in the guts, the mesentery, the ventricles of the bra's, what filth, what bilious or mucous matter, and, perhaps, crawling worms, that are in the most proud or comely person, I should think that the cover of a cleaner skin, and the borrowed ornaments of apparel, make no great difference between such a body and a carcass; (which may be also covered with an adorned coffin and monument, to deceive such spectators as see but outsides;) the change is not so great of corruptible flesh, replete with such feld excrements, into corrupted flesh, as some fools imagine.

7. Yet more: to depart from such a body is but to be loosed from the bondage of corruption, and from a clog and prison of the soul. I say not that God put a preëxistent soul into this prison penally, for former faults; I must say no more than I can prove, or than I know; but that body which was an apt servant to innocent man's soul, is become as a prison to him now; what alteration sin made upon the nature of the body, as whether it be more terrene and gross than else it would have been, I have no reason to assert; of earth or dust it was at first, and to dust it is sentenced to return. But no doubt but it hath its part in that dispositive deprivation which is the fruit of sin. We find that the soul, as sensitive, is so imprisoned, or shut up, in flesh, that sometimes it is more than one door that must be opened before the object and the faculty can meet. In the eye, indeed, the soul seemeth to have a window to look out at, and to be almost itself visible to others; and yet there are many interposing tunicles, and a suffusion, or winking, can make the clearest sight to be as useless for the time as if it were none; and if sense be thus shut up from its object, no wonder if reason also be under difficulties from corporeal impediments, and if the soul that is yoked with such a body can go no faster than its heavy pace.

8. Yet further: to depart from such a body, is but to be separated from an accidental enemy, and one of our greatest and most hurtful enemies; though still we say, that it is not by any default in the work of our Creator, but by the effects of sin, that it is such; what could Satan, or any other enemy of our souls, have done against us without our flesh? What is it but the interest of this body, that standeth in competition against the interest of our souls and God? What else do the profane sell their heavenly inheritance for, as Esau his birthright? No man loveth evil, as evil, but as some way a real or seeming good; and what good is it but that which seemeth good for the body? What else is the bait of ambition, covetousness, and sensuality, but the interest and pleas-

ure of this flesh? What taketh up the thoughts and care which we should lay out upon things spiritual and heavenly, but this body and its life? What pleasures are they that steal away men's hearts from the heavenly pleasures of faith, hope, and love, but the pleasures of this flesh? This draweth us to sin; this hindereth us from and in our duty. This body hath its interest, which must be minded, and its inordinate appetite, which must be pleased; or else what murmurings and disquiet must we expect! Were it not for bodily interest, and its temptations, how much more innocently and holily might I live! I should have nothing to care for, but to please God, and to be pleased in him, were it not for the care of this bodily life. What employment should my will and love have, but to delight in God, and love him and his interest, were it not for the love of the body, and its concerns? By this the mind is darkened, and the thoughts diverted: by this our wills are perverted and corrupted, and, by loving things corporeal, contract a strangeness and aversion from things spiritual: by this, heart and time are alienated from God; our guilt is increased, and our heavenly desire and hopes destroyed; life made unholy and uncomfortable, and death made terrible; God and our souls separated, and life eternal set by, and in danger of being utterly lost. I know that it is the sinful soul that is in all this the chief cause and agent; but what is it but bodily interest that is its temptation, bait, and end? What but the body, and its life, and its pleasure, is the chief, objective, alluring cause of all this sin and misery? And shall I take such a body to be better than heaven, or be loath to be loosed from so troublesome a yoke-fellow, or to be separated from so burdensome and dangerous a companion?

Obj. But I know this habitation, but the next I know not. I have long been acquainted with this body, and this world, but the next I am unacquainted with.

Ans. 1. If you know it, you know all that of it which I have mentioned before; you know it to be a burden and snare. I am sure I know, by long experience, that this flesh hath been a painful lodging to my soul, and this world as a tumultuous ocean, or like the uncertain and stormy region of the air. And well he deserveth bondage, pain, and enmity, who will love them because he is acquainted with them, and is loath to leave them because he hath had them long, and is afraid of being well because he hath been long sick.

2. And do you not know the next and better habitation? Is faith no knowledge? If you believe God's promise, you know that such a state there is; and you know, in general, that it is better than this world; and you know that we shall be in holiness and glorious happiness with Christ; and is this no knowledge? 3.

And what we know not, Christ, that prepareth and promiseth it, doth know; and is that nothing to us, if really we trust our souls to him? He that knoweth not more good by heaven than by earth is yet so earthly and unbelieving, that it is no wonder if he be afraid and unwilling to depart.

II. In departing from this body and life, I must depart from all its ancient pleasures: I must taste no more sweetness in meat, or drink, or rest, or sport, or any such thing, that now delighteth me: house and lands, and goods, and wealth, must all be left; and the place where I live must know me no more. All my possessions must be no more to me, nor all that I labored for, or took delight in, than if they had never been at all.

And what though it must be so? Consider, O my soul! 1. Thy ancient pleasures are all past already; thou lovest none of them by death, for they are all lost before, if immortal grace have not, by sanctifying them, made the benefits of them to become immortal. All the sweet draughts, and morsels, and sports, and laughers; all the sweet thoughts of thy worldly possessions, or thy hopes, that ever thou hadst till this present hour, are passed by, dead, and gone already. All that death doth to such as these is, to prevent such, that on earth thou shalt have no more.

2. And is not that the case of every brute, that hath no comfort from the prospect of another life, to repair his loss? and yet as our dominion diminisheth their pleasure while they live, by our keeping them under fear and labor, so, at our will, their lives must end. To please a gentleman's appetite for half an hour, or less, birds, beasts, and fishes, must lose life itself, and all the pleasure which light might have afforded them for many years; yea, perhaps many of these (birds and fishes at least) must die to become but one feast to a rich man, if not one ordinary meal. And is not their sensual pleasure of the same nature as ours? Meat is as sweet to them, and ease as welcome, and lust as strong, (in season;) and the pleasure that death depriveth our flesh of, is such as is common to man with brutes: why then should it seem hard to us to lose that, in the course of nature, which our wills deprive them of at our pleasure? When, if we are believers, we can say, that we do but exchange these delights of life for the greater delights of a life with Christ, which is a comfort which our fellow-creatures (the brutes) have not.

3. And, indeed, the pleasures of life are usually imbittered with so much pain, that to a great part of the world doth seem to exceed them; the vanity and vexation is so great and grievous as the pleasure seldom countervaileth. It is true, that nature desireth life, even under sufferings that are but tolerable, rather than to die; but that is not so much from the sensible pleasure of life,

as from mere natural inclination ; which God hath laid so deep, that free-will hath no power against it. As before I said, that the body of man is such a thing, that could we see through the skin, (as men may look through a glass hive upon the bees,) and see all the parts and motion, the filth and excrements that are in it, the soul would hardly be willing to actuate, love and cherish such a mass of unclean matter, and to dwell in such a loathsome place, unless God had necessitated it by nature (deeper than reason or sense) to such a love and such a labor, by the *pondus* or spring of inclination ; even as the cow would not else lick the unclean calf, nor women themselves be at so much labor and trouble with their children, while there is little of them to be pleasing, but uncleanness, and crying, and helpless impatency, to make them wearisome, had not necessitating inclination done more hereto than any other sense or reason ; even so I now say of the pleasure of living, that the sorrows are so much greater to multitudes than the sensible delight, that life would not be so commonly chosen and endured under so much trouble, were not men determined thereto by natural necessitating inclination ; (or deterred from death by the fears of misery to the separated soul ;) and yet all this kept not some, counted the best and wisest of the heathens, from taking it for the valor and wisdom of a man to make away his life in time of extremity, and from making this the great answer to them that grudge at God for making their lives so miserable, ' If the misery be greater than the good of life, why dost thou not end it ? Thou mayest do that when thou wilt.'

Our meat and drink is pleasant to the healthful, but it costeth poor men so much toil, and labor, and care, and trouble to procure a poor diet for themselves, and their families, that, I think, could they live without eating and drinking, they would thankfully exchange the pleasure of it all, to be eased of their care and toil in getting it. And when sickness cometh, even the pleasantest food is loathsome.

4. And do we not willingly interrupt and lay by these pleasures every night, when we betake ourselves to sleep ? It is possible, indeed, a man may then have pleasant dreams ; but I think few go to sleep for the pleasure of dreaming ; either no dreams, or vain, or troublesome dreams, are much more common. And to say that rest and ease is my pleasure, is but to say, that my daily labor and cares are so much greater than my waking pleasure, that I am glad to lay by both together. For what is ease but deliverance from weariness and pain ? For in deep and dreamless sleep there is little positive sense of the pleasure of rest itself. But, indeed, it is more from nature's necessitated inclination to this self-easing and repairing means, than from the positive pleas-

ure of it, that we desire sleep. And if we can thus be contented every night to die, as it were, to all our waking pleasures, why should we be unwilling to die to them at once?

5. If it be the inordinate pleasures forbidden of God, which you are loath to leave, those must be left before you die, or else it had been better for you never to have been born: yea, every wise and godly man doth cast them off with detestation. You must be against holiness on that account, as well as against death; and, indeed, the same cause which maketh men unwilling to live a holy life, hath a great hand in making them unwilling to die, even because they are loath to leave the pleasure of sin. If the wicked be converted, he must be gluttonous and drunken no more; he must live in pride, vain-glory, worldliness, and sensual pleasures no more; and therefore he draweth back from a holy life, as if it were from death itself. And so he is the loather to die, because he must have no more of the pleasures of his riches, pomp, and honors, his sports, and lust, and pleased appetite, forever. But what is this to them that have mortified the flesh, with the affections and lusts thereof?

6. Yea, it is these forbidden pleasures which are the great impediments both of our holiness and our truest pleasures; and one of the reasons why God forbiddeth them, is, because they hinder us from better. And if for our own good we must forsake them when we turn to God, it must be supposed that they should be no reason against our willingness to die, but rather that to be free from the danger of them, we should be the more willing.

7. But the great satisfying answer of this objection is, that death will pass us to far greater pleasures, with which all these are not worthy to be compared. But of this, more in due place.

III. When I die, I must depart, not only from sensual delights, but from the more manly pleasures of my studies, knowledge and converse with many wise and godly men, and from all my pleasure in reading, hearing, public and private exercises of religion, &c. I must leave my library, and turn over those pleasant books no more. I must no more come among the living, nor see the faces of my faithful friends, nor be seen of man. Houses, and cities, and fields, and countries, gardens, and walks, will be nothing as to me. I shall no more hear of the affairs of the world, of man, or wars, or other news, nor see what becomes of that beloved interest of wisdom, piety, and peace, which I desire may prosper, &c.

Ans. 1. Though these delights are far above those of sensual sinners, yet, alas! how low and little are they! How small is our knowledge in comparison of our ignorance! And how little doth the knowledge of learned doctors differ from the thoughts of a silly

child! For, from our childhood, we take it in by drops; and as trifles are the matter of childish knowledge, so words, and notions, and artificial forms, do make up more of the learning of the world, than is commonly understood, and many such learned men know little more of any great and excellent things themselves, than rustics that are contemned by them for their ignorance. God, and the life to come, are little better known by them, if not much less, than by many of the unlearned. What is it but a child-game, that many logicians, rhetoricians, grammarians, yea, metaphysicians, and other philosophers, in their eagerest studies and disputes, are exercised in? Of how little use is it to know what is contained in many hundreds of the volumes that fill our libraries! Yea, or to know many of the most glorious speculations in physics, mathematics, &c., which have given some the title of *Virtuosi* and *Ingeniosi*, in these times, who have little the more wit or virtue to live to God, or overcome temptations from the flesh and world, and to secure their everlasting hopes! What pleasure or quiet doth it give to a dying man to know almost any of their trifles?

2. Yea, it were well if much of our reading and learning did us no harm, nay, more than good. I fear lest books are to some but a more honorable kind of temptation than cards and dice, lest many a precious hour be lost in them, that should be employed on much higher matters, and lest many make such knowledge but an unholy, natural, yea, carnal pleasure, as worldlings do the thoughts of their lands and honors, and lest they be the more dangerous by how much the less suspected. But the best is, it is a pleasure so fenced from the slothful, with thorny labor of hard and long studies, that laziness saveth more from it than grace and holy wisdom doth. But, doubtless, fancy and the natural intellect may, with as little sanctity, live in the pleasure of reading, knowing, disputing, and writing, as others spend their time at a game at chess, or other ingenious sport.

For my own part, I know that the knowledge of natural things is valuable, and may be sanctified; much more theological theory; and when it is so, it is of good use; and I have little knowledge which I find not some way useful to my highest ends. And if wishing or money could procure more, I would wish, and empty my purse for it; but yet, if many score or hundred books which I have read, had been all unread, and I had that time now to lay out upon higher things, I should think myself much richer than now I am. And I must earnestly pray, the Lord forgive me the hours that I have spent in reading things less profitable, for the pleasing of a mind that would fain know all, which I should have spent for the increase of holiness in myself and others! And yet I must thankfully acknowledge to God, that from my youth he taught me

to begin with things of greatest weight, and to refer most of my other studies thereto, and to spend my days under the motives of necessity and profit to myself, and those with whom I had to do. And I now think better of the course of Paul, that determined to know nothing but a crucified Christ, among the Corinthians; that is, so to converse with them as to use, and glorying as if he knew nothing else; and so of the rest of the apostles and primitive ages. And though I still love and honor, (and am not of Dr. Colet's mind, who, as Erasmus saith, most slighted Augustine,) yet I less censure even that Carthage council which forbade the reading of the heathens' books of learning and arts than formerly I have done. And I would have men savor most that learning in their health, which they will, or should, savor most in sickness, and near to death.

3. And, alas! how dear a vanity is this knowledge! That which is but theoretic and notional, is but a tickling delectation of the fancy or mind, little differing from a pleasant dream. But how many hours, what gazing of the wearied eye, what stretching thoughts of the impatient brain, must it cost us, if we will attain to any excellency! Well saith Solomon, "Much reading is a weariness to the flesh, and he that increaseth knowledge, increaseth sorrow." How many hundred studious days and weeks, and how many hard and tearing thoughts, hath my little, very little knowledge cost me; and how much infirmity and painfulness to my flesh, increase of painful diseases, and loss of bodily ease and health! How much pleasure to myself of other kinds, and how much acceptance with men, have I lost by it, which I might easily have had in a more conversant and plausible way of life! And when all is done, if I reach to know any more than others of my place and order, I must differ so much (usually) from them, and if I manifest not that difference, but keep all that knowledge to myself, I sin against conscience and nature itself. The love of man and the love of truth oblige me to be soberly communicative. Were I so indifferent to truth and knowledge, as easily to forbear their propagation, I must also be so indifferent to them, as not to think them worth so dear a price as they have cost me, (though they are the free gifts of God.) As nature is universally inclined to the propagation of the kind by generation, so is the intellectual nature to the communication of knowledge, which yet hath its lust and inordinacy in proud, ignorant, hasty teachers and disputers, as the generating faculty hath in fornicators and adulterers.

But if I obey nature and conscience in communicating that knowledge which containeth my difference aforesaid, the dissenters too often take themselves disparaged by it, how peaceably soever I manage it: and as bad men take the piety of the godly to be an

accusation of their impiety, so many teachers take themselves to be accused of ignorance, by such as condemn their errors by the light of truth : and if you meddle not with any person, yet take they their opinions to be so much their interest, as that all that is said against them they take as said against themselves. And then, alas ! what envyings, what whispering disparagements, and what backbitings, if not malicious slanders and underminings, do we meet with from the carnal clergy ! And O that it were all from them alone ! and that among the zealous and suffering party of faithful preachers, there were not much of such iniquity, and that none of them preached Christ in strife and envy ! It is sad, that error should find so much shelter under the selfishness and pride of pious men, and that the friends of truth should be tempted to reject and abuse so much of it in their ignorance as they do : but the matter of fact is too evident to be hid.

But, especially, if we meet with a clergy that are high, and have a great deal of worldly interest at the stake ; or if they be in councils and synods, and have got the major vote, they too easily believe that either their grandeur, reverence, names, or numbers, must give them the reputation of being orthodox, and in the right, and will warrant them to account and defame him as erroneous, heretical, schismatical, singular, factious, or proud, that presumeth to contradict them, and to know more than they. Of which, not only the case of Nazianzen, Martin, Chrysostom, are sad proofs, but also the proceedings of too many general and provincial councils. And so our hard studies and darling truth must make us as owls, or reproached persons, among those reverend brethren, who are ignorant at easier rates, and who find it a far softer kind of life to think and say as the most or best esteemed do, than to purchase reproach and obloquy so dearly.

And the religious people, of the several parts, will say as they hear their teachers do, and be the militant followers of their too militant leaders ; and it will be their house talk, their shop talk, their street talk, if not their church talk, that such an one is an erroneous, dangerous man, because he is not as ignorant and erroneous as they ; especially if they be the followers of a teacher much exasperated by confutation, and engaged in the controversy ; and also if it should be suffering confessors that are contradicted, or men most highly esteemed for extraordinary degrees of piety ; then, what cruel censures must he expect, who ever so tenderly would suppress their errors ?

O, what sad instances of this are, 1. The case of the confessors in Cyprian's days, who, as many of his epistles show, became the great disturbers of that church. 2. And the Egyptian monks at Alexandria, in the days of Theophilus, who turned Anthropol-

morphites, and raised abominable tumults, with woful scandal and odious bloodshed. 3. And O that this age had not yet greater instances to prove the matter than any of these!

And, now, should a man be loath to die, for fear of leaving such troublesome, costly learning and knowledge, as the wisest men can here attain?

4. But the chief answer is yet behind. No knowledge is lost, but perfected, and changed for much nobler, sweeter, greater knowledge. Let men be never so uncertain in particular *de modo*, whether acquired habits of intellect and memory die with us, as being dependent on the body; yet, by what manner soever, that a far clearer knowledge we shall have than is here attainable, is not to be doubted of. And the cessation of our present mode of knowing, is but the cessation of our ignorance and imperfection; as our wakening endeth a dreaming knowledge, and our maturity endeth the trifling knowledge of a child; for so saith the Holy Ghost; 1 Cor. xiii. 8—12. Love never faileth, and we can love no more than we know; but whether there be prophecies they shall fail, (that is, cease;) whether there be tongues they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, notional and abstractive, such as we have now, it shall vanish away: "When I was a child, I spake as a child, understood as a child, I thought as a child; but when I became a man, I put away childish things: for now we see through a glass (*per species*) darkly," as men understand a thing by a metaphor, parable, or riddle, "but then face to face;" even creatures intuitively, as in themselves naked and open to our sight. "Now, I know, in part;" (not *rem sed aliquid rei*; in which sense Sanchez truly saith, '*nihil scitur*;') "but then I shall know, even as I am known; not as God knoweth us;" for our own knowledge and his must not be so comparatively likened; but as holy spirits know us both now and forever, we shall both know and be known by immediate intuition.

If a physician be to describe the parts of a man, and the latent diseases of his patient, he is fain to search hard, and bestow many thoughts of it, besides his long reading and converse, to make him capable of knowing; and when all is done, he goeth much upon conjectures, and his knowledge is mixed with many uncertainties, yea, and mistakes; but when he openeth the corpse, he seeth all, and his knowledge is more full, more true, and more certain; besides that, it is easily and quickly attained, even by a present look. A countryman knoweth the town, the fields, and rivers, where he dwelleth, yea, and the plants and animals, with ease and certain clearness, when he that must know the same things by the study of geographical writings and tables, must know them but with a general, and unsatisfactory, and oft a much mistaking kind of

knowledge. Alas! when our present knowledge hath cost a man the study of forty, or fifty, or sixty years, how lean and poor, how doubtful and unsatisfactory is it, after all! But when God will show us himself, and all things, and when heaven is known as the sun by its own light, this will be the clear, sure, and satisfactory knowledge: "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God;" Matt. v. "And without holiness none can see him;" Heb. xii. 14. This sight will be worthy the name of wisdom, when our present glimpse is but philosophy, a love and desire of wisdom. So far should we be from fearing death, through the fear of losing our knowledge, or any of the means of knowledge, that it should make us rather long for the world of glorious light, that we might get out of this darkness, and know all that with an easy look, to our joy and satisfaction, which here we know with troublesome doubtings, or not at all. Shall we be afraid of darkness in the heavenly light, or of ignorance, when we see the Lord of glory?

And as for the loss of sermons, books, and other means, surely it is no loss to cease the means when we have attained the end. Cannot we spare our winter clothes, as troublesome, in the heat of summer, and sit by the hot fire without our gloves? Cannot we sit at home without a horse or a coach, or set them by at our journey's end? Cannot we lie in bed without boots and spurs? Is it grievous to us to cease our physic when we are well? Even here, he is happier that hath least of the creature, and needeth least, than he that hath much and needeth much; because all creature commodities and helps have also their discommodities and troublesomeness; and the very applying and using so many remedies of our want is tedious of itself; and as God only needeth nothing, but is self-sufficient, and therefore only perfectly and essentially happy, so those are likest God that need least from without, and have the greatest plenitude of internal goodness. What need we to preach, hear, read, pray, to bring us to heaven when we are there?

And as for our friends, and our converse with them, as relations, or as wise, religious, and faithful to us, he that believeth not that there are far more, and far better, in heaven, than are on earth, doth not believe, as he ought, that there is a heaven. Our friends here are wise, but they are unwise also; they are faithful, but partly unfaithful; they are holy, but also, alas! too sinful; they have the image of God, but blotted and dishonored by their faults; they do God and his church much service, but they also do too much against him, and too much for Satan, even when they intend the honor of God; they promote the gospel, but they also hinder it: their weakness, ignorance, error, selfishness, pride, passion, division, contention, scandals, and remissness, do oft so much

hurt, that it is hard to discern whether it be not greater than their good to the church, or to their neighbors. Our friends are our helpers and comforters; but how oft, also, are they our hinderers, troubles, and grief! But in heaven they are altogether wise, and holy, and faithful, and concordant, and have nothing in them, nor there done by them, but what is amiable to God and man.

And, with our faithful friends, we have here a mixture, partly of useless and burdensome persons, and partly of unfaithful hypocrites, and partly of self-conceited, factious wranglers, and partly of malicious, envious underminers, and partly by implacable enemies; and how many of all these, set together, is there for one worthy, faithful friend! And how great a number is there to trouble you, for one that will indeed comfort you! But in heaven there are none but the wise and holy; no hypocrites, no burdensome neighbors, no treacherous, or oppressing, or persecuting enemies are there. And is not all good and amiable better than a little good, with so troublesome a mixture of noisome evils?

Christ loved his disciples, his kindred; yea, and all mankind, and took pleasure in doing good to all, and so did his apostles; but how poor a requital had he or they from any but from God! Christ's own brethren believed not in him, but wrangled with him, almost like those that said to him on the cross, "If thou be the Son of God, come down, and we will believe." Peter himself was once a Satan to him; (Matt. xvi.) and after, with cursing and swearing, denied him: and all his disciples forsook him, and fled; and what, then, could be expected from others?

No friends have a perfect suitableness to each other; and roughness and inequalities that are nearest us are most troublesome. The wonderful variety and contrariety of apprehensions, interest, educations, temperaments, and occasions, and temptations, &c., are such, that, while we are scandalized at the discord and confusions of the world, we must recall ourselves, and admire that all-ruling providence which keepeth up so much order and concord as there is. We are, indeed, like people in crowded streets, who, going several ways, molest each other with their jostling oppositions; or, like boys at football, striving to overthrow each other for the ball; but it is a wonder of divine power and wisdom, that all the world are not continually in mortal war.

If I do men no harm, yet if I do but cross their wills, it goeth for a provoking injury; and when there are as many wills as persons, who is it that can please them all? Who hath money enough to please all the poor that need it, or the covetous that desire it? Or, who can live with displeased men, and not feel some of the fruits of their displeasure? What day goeth over my head, in which abundance desire not, or expect not, impossibilities from

me? And how great is the number of them that expect unrighteous things! By nothing do I displease so many as by not displeasing God and my conscience; and for nothing am I so deeply accused of sin as for not sinning. And the world will not think well of any thing that crosseth their opinion and carnal interest, be it never so conform to God's commands. I must confess, that, while I suffer from all sides, few men have more common and open praises from their persecutors than I: but while they praise me in general, and for other particulars, they aggravate my non-conformity to their opinions and wills, and take me to be so much the more hurtful to them. The greatest crimes that have been charged on me, have been for the things which I thought to be my greatest duties, and for those parts of my obedience, to my conscience and God, which cost me dearest; and where I pleased my flesh least, I pleased the world least. At how cheap a rate to my flesh could I have got the applause of factious men, if that had been my end and business! Would I have conformed to their wills, and taken a bishopric, and the honors and riches of the world, how good a man had I been called by the diocesan party! And, O, what praise I should have with the Papists, could I turn Papist; and all the backbiting and bitter censures of the Antinomians, Anabaptists, and Separatists, had been turned into praise, could I have said as they, or not contradicted them! But otherwise there is no escaping their accusations; and is this tumultuous, militant, yea, malignant world, a place that I should be loath to leave?

Alas! our darkness, and weakness, and passions are such, that it is hard for a family, or a few faithful friends, to live so evenly in the exercise of love, as not to have oft unpleasant jars. What, then, is to be expected from strangers, and from enemies? Ten thousand persons will judge of abundance of my words and actions, who never knew the reason of them. Every one's conceptions are as the report and conveyance of the matter to them is; and while they have a various light, and false reports, (and defectiveness will make them false,) what can be expected, but false, injurious censures?

And though no outward thing on earth is more precious than the holy word, and worship, and ordinances of God, yet even here I see that which pointeth me up higher, and telleth me it is much better to be with Christ. Shall I love the name of heaven better than heaven itself? The Holy Scriptures are precious, because I have there the promise of glory; but is not the possession better than the promise? If a light and guide thither through this wilderness be good, surely the end must needs be better. And it hath pleased God, that all things on earth, and therefore, even the Sacred Scriptures, should bear the marks of our state of imperfec-

tion : imperfect persons were the penmen ; and imperfect human language is the conveying, signal, organical part of the matter ; and the method and phrase (though true and blameless) are far short of the heavenly perfection. Else so many commentators had not found so hard a task of it to expound innumerable difficulties, and reconcile so many seeming contradictions ; nor would infidels find matter of so strong temptation, and so much cavil as they do ; nor would Peter have told us of the difficulties of Paul's Epistles, and such occasions of men's wresting them to their own destruction. Heaven will not be made, to perfect spirits, the occasion of so many errors, and controversies, and quarrels, as the Scriptures are to us imperfect men on earth ; yea, heaven is the more desirable, because there I shall better understand the Scriptures than here I can ever hope to do. All the hard passages, now misunderstood, will be there made plain, and all the seeming contradictions reconciled ; and, which is much more, that God, that Christ, that New Jerusalem, that glory, and that felicity of souls, which are now known but darkly and enigmatically in the glass, will then be known intuitively as we see the face itself whose image only the glass first showed us. To leave my Bible, and go to the God and the heaven that is revealed, will be no otherwise a loss to me than to lay by my crutches, or spectacles, when I need them not, or to leave his image for the presence of my friend.

Much less do I need to fear the loss of all other books, or sermons, or other verbal informations. Much reading hath oft been a weariness to my flesh ; and the pleasure of my mind is much abated by the great imperfection of the means. Many books must be partly read, that I may know that they are scarce worth the reading ; and many must be read, to enable us to satisfy other men's expectations, and to confute those who abuse the authority of the authors against the truth ; and many good books must be read, that have little to add to what we have read in many others before ; and many that are blotted with ensnaring errors ; which, if we detect not, we leave snares for such as see them not ; and if we detect them, (never so tenderly, if truly,) we are taken to be injurious to the honor of the learned, godly authors, and proudly to overvalue our own conceits. And so lamentable is the case of all mankind, by the imperfections of human language, that those words which are invented for communication of conceptions, are so little fitted to their use, as rather to occasion misunderstandings and contentions ; there being scarce a word that hath not many significations, and that needeth not many more words to bring us to the true notice of the speaker's mind ; and when every word is a *signum*, that hath three relations, (1.) To the matter spoken of. (2.) To the mind of the speaker, as signifying his conceptions of

that matter. (3.) And to the mind of the hearer or reader, which is to be informed by it, it is so hard to find and use words that are fitted indeed to all these uses. and to have store of such, and mix no other, that few, if any, in the world, were ever so happy as to attain it. (1.) And if words be not fitted to the matter or things, they are false as to their first and proper use; and yet the penury of apt words, and the redundancy of others, and the authority of the masters of sciences, imposing arbitrary terms and notions on their disciples, and the custom of the vulgar, who have the empire, as to the sense of words, have all conspired to make words inapt, and of very uncertain signification. So that when students have learned words by long and hard studies, they are oft little the nearer the true knowledge of the things; and too oft, by their inaptitude, misled to false conceptions. And so their saying is too often true, that a great book is a great evil, while it containeth so great a number of uncertain words, which become the matter of great contentions.

(2.) And when the mind of the speaker or writer is no better informed by such notions, but his conceptions of things are some false, some confused and undigested, what wonder if his words do no otherwise express his mind to others, when even men of clearest understanding find it difficult to have words still ready to communicate their conceptions with truth and clearness. To form true sentiments of things into apt, significant words, is a matter of mere art, and requireth an apt teacher, and a serious learner, and long use (and too many take their art of speaking, in prayer, conference, or preaching, to have more in it of wisdom and piety than it hath; and some too much condemn the unaccustomed that want it.)

(3.) And if we could fit our words well to the matter, and to our minds, (with that double verity,) yet still it is hard to fit them to the reader or hearer; for want of which they are lost as to him; and his information being our end, they are therefore so far lost to us. And that which is spoken most congruously to the matter, is seldom fitted to the capacity of the receiver. And *recipitur ad modum recipientis, et pro capto lectoris, &c.* Some readers or hearers (yea, almost all) are so used to unapt words and notions, obtruded on mankind, by the master of words, that they cannot understand us if we change their terms and offer them fitter; and yet least understand those which they think that they best understand; and all men must have long time to learn the art of words, before they can understand them as well as before they can readily use them. And the duller any man is, and of less understanding, the more words are necessary to make him understand; and yet his memory is the less capable of retaining many. This is our

difficulty, not only in catechising, but in all other writings and teaching, a short catechism, or a short style, the ignorant understand not ; and a long one they remember not. And he that will accommodate one judicious reader or hearer with profound matter, or an accurate style, must incommode multitudes that are incapable of it ; and, therefore, such must be content with few approvers, and leave the applause of the multitude to the more popular, unless he be one that can seasonably suit himself to both.

A man that resolveth not to be deceived by ambiguous words, and maketh it his first work, in all his readings and disputings, to difference between words, and sense, and things, and strictly to examine each disputed term, till the speaker's meaning be distinctly known, will see the lamentable case of the church, and all mankind, and what shadows of knowledge deceive the world, and in what useless dreams the greatest part of men, yea, of learned men, do spend their days ; much of that, which some men unweariedly study, and take to be the honor of their understandings and their lives ; and much of that, which multitudes place their piety and hopes of salvation in, being a mere game at words, and useless notions ; and as truly to be called vanity and vexation, as is the rest of the vain show, that most men walk in. My sad and bitter thoughts of the heathen, infidel, Mahometan world, and of the common corruptions of rulers and teachers, cities and countries, senates and councils, I will not here open to others, lest they offend ; nor cry out as Seneca, *Omnes mali sumus*, or, *Stultorum plena sunt omnia*, nor describe the furious spirits of the clergy, and their ignorance, and unrighteous calumnies and schisms, as Gregory Nazianzen and others do, nor voluminously lament the seeming hopeless case of earth, by the boldness, blindness, and fury of men that make use of such sad considerations, to loosen my love from such a world, and make me willing to be with Christ.

9. And if other men's words and writings are blemished with so much imperfection, why should I think that my own are blameless ? I must forever be thankful for the holy instructions and writings of others, notwithstanding human frailty, and contentious men's abuse of words ; and so I must be thankful that God hath made any use of my own, for the good of souls, and his church's edification. But with how many allays are such comforts here mixed ! We are not the teachers of a well-ruled school, where learners are ranked into several forms, that every one may have the teaching which is agreeable to his capacity ; but we must set open the door to all that will crowd in, and publish our writings to all sorts of readers ; and there being as various degrees of capacity as there are men and women, and, consequently, great variety and contrariety of apprehensions, it is easy, *ab antecedente*, to know

what various reception we must expect. We cast out our doctrine almost as a foot-ball is turned out among boys in the street, in some congregations: few understand it, but every one censureth it. Few come as learners, or teachable disciples, but most come to sit as judges on their teacher's words; and yet have not either the skill, or the patience, or the diligence, which is necessary, in a just trial, to a righteous judgment. But as our words agree or disagree with the former conceptions of every hearer, so are they judged to be wise or foolish, sound or unsound, true or false, fit or unfit. Few sermons that I preach, but one extollet them, and wisheth they were printed, and another accuseth them of some heinous fault: some men are pleased with clearness and accurateness of doctrine; and others account it too high, and say we shoot over the hearers' heads, and like nothing but the fervent application of what they knew before. Most hearers are displeased with that which they most need: if they err, they reproach that doctrine as erroneous that would cure them: if they are guilty of any prevailing distemper and sin, they take that application to be injurious to them, which would convince them, and save them from that guilt. Most are much pleased with plain and zealous reproof of sin; but it must be other men's sins, and not their own. The poor love to hear of the evil of oppression and unmercifulness, of pride, fullness, and idleness, and all the sins of the rich: subjects love to hear of their ruler's faults, and say, O, this man is no flatterer; he dares tell the greatest of their sins; but if they hear of their own, they take it for an injury. Rulers like a sermon for submission and obedience; but how few love to hear of the evil of injustice and oppression, or pride and sensuality, or to read Luke xvi. or xii. or James v.; to hear of the necessity of holiness, justice, and temperance, and of death, and judgment, and the life to come! Every sectary and dogmatist delighteth to have his own opinion cried up, and his party praised as the chiefest saints; but all that tendeth to the praise of those he dissenteth from, and accounteth adversaries to the truth, is distasteful to him, as a complying with iniquity, and a strengthening of the enemies of Christ: and all that uncharitableness which he expecteth from us against others, is as much expected by others against him, and such as he.

This day, while I am writing these words, my pockets are full of letters sent to me, on one side importunately charging it on me as my duty to conform to the oaths, declarations, covenants, and practices, now imposed, or else to give over preaching, (which would please them;) and on the other side vehemently censuring me as guilty of grievous sin, for declaring my judgment for so much of conformity as I have done; and charging me by predictions as guilty of the sufferings of all that are otherwise minded,

for communicating in the sacrament, and the common prayers of the church ; and others in the mid-way, persuading me equally to bear my testimony against unjust separation and persecution, and to endeavor still, if possible, to save a self-destroying people from the tearing fury of these two extremes. And how should I answer these contrary expectations, or escape the censures of such expectants ?

And it hath pleased God, who, thirty years and more, had tried me by human applause, of late in this city (where multitudes of persons of contrary minds are, like passengers in crowded streets, still jostling and offending one another,) to exercise me with men's daily backbitings and cavils : and so many have chosen me for the subject of their discourse, that I may say as Paul, (1 Cor. iv. 9, 10, &c.) " We are made a spectacle, or theatre, to the world, and to angels, and to men : we are fools for Christ's sake, but ye are wise in Christ," &c. Did I not live out of the noise in retirement, taken up with pain, and expectations of my change, what an annoyance to me would it be to hear religious persons, that have a God, a Christ, a heaven, to talk of, to abuse their time and tongues in so much talking of one so inconsiderable, and that hath so little to do with them, or they with him ; while with some overvaluing me and others still quarreling, I am the matter of their idle, sinful talk. The persecutors, for divers years after, first silencing, (if not still,) and the separatists, for two or three years last past, have been possessed with so strange a jealousy and quarrelsome a disposition against me, that they seem to take it for their interest to promote my defamation, and for much of their work to search what may afford them any matter of accusation in every sermon that I preach, and every book that I write. And though the fury of the persecutors be such as maketh them much incapable of such converse and sober consideration as is needful to their true information and satisfaction, yet most of the more religious cavilers are satisfied as soon as I have spoken with them, and all endeth in a *putarem* or *non putarem* : for want of accurateness and patience, they judge rashly before they understand, and, when they understand, confess their error ; and yet many go on and take no warning after many times conviction of their mistake. Even in books that are still before their eyes (as well as in transient words and sermons) they heedlessly leave out, or put in, or alter and misreport plain words, and, with confidence, affirm those things to have been said that never were said, but, perhaps, the contrary. And when all people will judge of the good or evil of our words, as they think we have reason to use them or forbear them, how can we satisfy men that are out of our hearing, and to whom we cannot tell our reasons ? Most men are of private, narrow observation, and judge of the good

or hurt that our words do by those that they themselves converse with ; and when I convince them that my decisions of many questions (which they are offended at) are true, they say, it is an unreasonable and a hurtful truth ; and when I have called them to look further abroad in the world, and told them my reasons, they say, ' Had these been all set down, men would have been satisfied. And on how hard terms do we instruct such persons, whose narrow understandings cannot know obvious reasons of what we say till they are particularly told them ! And so to tell men the reasons of all that such can quarrel with, will make every book to swell with commentaries to such a bigness as they can neither buy nor read ; and they come not to us to know our reasons, nor have we leisure to open them to every single person : and thus suspicious men, when their understandings want the humbling acquaintance with their ignorance, and their consciences that tenderness which should restrain them from rash judging, go on to accuse such needful truths of which they know not the use and reason. And what man living hath the leisure and opportunity to acquaint all the ignorant persons in city and country with all the reasons of all that he shall say, write, or do ? Or who, that writeth not a page instead of a sentence, can so write that every unprepared reader shall understand him ? And what hopes hath the tutor or school-master of preserving his reputation, who shall be accounted erroneous, and accused of unsound or injurious doctrine, by every scholar that understandeth not his words, and all the reasons of them ?

But God, in great mercy to me, hath made this my lot (not causing, but permitting, the sins of the contentious) that I might, before death, be better weaned from all below : had my temptations from inordinate applause had no allay, they might have been more dangerously strong. Even yet while church-dividers, on both extremes, do make me the object of their daily obloquy, the continued respects of the sober and peaceable are so great as to be a temptation strong enough, to so weak a person, to give a check to my desires to leave the world. It is long since riches and worldly honor appeared to me as they are, as not rendering the world much lovely or desirable. But the love and concord of religious persons hath a more amiable aspect : there is so much holiness in these, that I was loath to call them vanity and vexation ; but yet as flesh and blood would refer them to selfish ends, and any way value them as a carnal interest, I must so call them, and number them with the things that are loss and dung ; Phil. iii. 7, 8. Selfishness can serve itself upon things good and holy ; and if good men, and good books, and good sermons, would make the world seem overlovely to us, it will be a mercy of God to abate the temptation ; and if my soul, looking toward the heavenly Jerusalem, be hinder-

ed as Paul was in his journey to Jerusalem (Acts xx. and xxi.) by the love of ancient friends and hearers, I must say, 'What mean you, to weep and break my heart! I am ready to leave the dearest friends on earth, and life, and all the pleasures of life, for the presence of far better friends with Christ, and the sweeter pleasures of a better life.' That little amiableness, which is in things below, is in godly men as life in the heart, which dieth last: when that is all gone, when we are dead to the love of the godly themselves, and to learning, books, and mediate ordinances, so far as they serve a selfish interest, and tempt down our hearts from heavenly aspirings, the world is then crucified to us, indeed, and we to it. I rejoice to tread in the footsteps of my Lord, who had some, indeed, weeping about his cross, but was forsaken by all his disciples, while in the hour of temptation they all fled! But my desertion is far less, for it is less than I am fit to bear. If God will justify, who shall condemn? If he be for me, who shall be against me? O, may I not be put to that dreadful case, to cry out, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" And may nothing separate me from his love! And then, were I forsaken of the sober and peaceable, as I am, in part, of some quarrelsome dividers, how tolerable a trial would it be! Man is as dust in the balance, that addeth little to it, and signifieth nothing when God is in the other end. But I suspect still that I make too much account of man, when this case hath taken up too much of my observation.

10. And of all things, surely a departing soul hath least cause to fear the losing of its notice of the affairs of the world; of peace, or wars, or church, or kingdoms! For, (1.) If the sun can send forth its material beams, and operate by motion, light, and heat, at such a distance as this earth, why should I think that blessed spirits are such local, confined, and impotent substances, as not to have notice of the things of earth? Had I but bodily eyes, I could see more from the top of a tower or hill, than any one that is below can do. And shall I know less of earth from heaven than I do now? It is unlike that my capacity will be so little, and if it were, it is unlike that Christ and all the angels will be so strange to me, as to give me no notice of things that so much concern my God and my Redeemer, (to whom I am united,) and the holy society of which I am a part, and myself as a member of Christ and that society! I do not think that the communion of the celestial inhabitants is so narrow and slow, as it is of walking clods of earth, and of souls that are confined to such dark lanterns as this body is. Stars can shine one to another, and we on earth can see them so far off in their heaven. And sure then, if they have a seeing faculty, each of them can see many of us, even the kingdoms of the world. Spirits are most active, and of powerful

and quick communication. They need not send letters, or write books to one another, nor lift up a voice to make each other hear; nor is there any unkindness, division, or unsociable selfishness among them, which may cause them to conceal their notices or their joys; but as activity, so unity is greatest where there is most perfection: they will so be many as yet to be one; and their knowledge will be one knowledge, and their love one love, and their joy one joy. Not by so perfect a unity as in God himself, who is one and but one; but such as is suitable to created imperfection, which participate of the perfection of the Creator, as the effect doth of the virtue of the cause, and therefore hath some participation of his unity. (O foolish soul! if I shall fear this unity with God, Christ, and all the holy spirits, lest I should lose my present separate individuation, when perfection and union are so near akin.) In a word, I have no cause to think that my celestial advancement will be a diminution of any desirable knowledge, even of things on earth; but contrarily, that it will be inconceivably increased.

(2.) But if indeed I shall know less of things below, it will be because that the knowledge of them is a part of vanity and vexation, which hath no place in heaven. So much knowledge of good and evil in lower matters, as came to us by sin, is unworthy of our fond tenaciousness, and fear of losing it. Surely the sad tidings which we have weekly in our news-books, our lamentable notices of heathen and infidel kingdoms, of the overspreading prevalency of barbarousness, idolatry, ignorance, and infidelity; of the rage and success of cruel tyrants; of the bloody wars of proud, unquiet, worldly men; of the misery of the oppressed, desolate countries, the dissipated churches, the persecuted, innocent Christians, are no such pleasing things as that we should be afraid to hear of such no more. To know or hear of the poor in famine, the rich in folly, the church distracted, the kingdom discontented, the godly scandalous by the effects of their errors, imperfections, and divisions; the wicked outrageous, and waxing worse, the falseness, or miscarriages, or sufferings of friends, the fury or success of enemies;—is this an intelligence which I cannot spare? What is the daily tidings that I hear, but of bloody wars, the undone countries, the persecuted churches, the silenced, banished, or imprisoned preachers; of the best removed in judgment from an unworthy world by death, and worse succeeding in their rooms; of the renewed designs and endeavors of the church's enemies; the implacable rage of the worldly and unquiet clergy, and the new divisions of self-conceited sectaries, and the obloquy and backbitings of each party against the other! How oft hear I the sad tidings of this friend's sickness or death, and that friend's discontent, and of another's fall, and of

many, very many's sufferings! My ears are daily filled with the cries of the poor, whom I cannot relieve; with the endless complaints of fearful, melancholy, despairing persons; with the wranglings of the ignorant and proud professors, and contentious divines, who censure most boldly where they are most erroneous or dark; or with the troublesome discontents of those that I converse with; and should I be afraid of the ending of so sad a tragedy, or of awaking out of such an unpleasant dream? Have I not many times thought of the privilege of the deaf, that hear not these troublesome and provoking things; and of the blind, that see not the vanities and temptations of this world? It is one part of the benefit of solitude, or a private life and habitation, to free me from many of these unpleasing objects; and a great part of the benefit of sleep, that, with my clothes, I may lay by these troublesome thoughts.

But other men tell me, the church cannot yet spare you; there is yet this and that necessary work to be done; there is this and that need, &c.

But, (1.) Is it we or God that must choose his servants, and cut out their work? Whose work am I doing? Is it my own or his? If his, is it not he that must tell me what, and when, and how long? And will not his will and choice be best? If I believe not this, how do I take him for my God? Doth God or I know better what he hath yet to do? And who is fittest to do it? The church's service and benefits must be measured out by our Master and Benefactor, and not by ourselves.

(2.) What am I to those more excellent persons whom, in all ages, he hath taken out of the world? And would men's thoughts of the church's needs detain them? The poor heathen, infidel, Mahometan nations have no preachers of the gospel. And if their need prove not that God will send them such, no country's need will prove that God will continue them such. Many more useful servants of Christ have died in their youth: John Janeway preached but one sermon; Joseph Allen (and many other excellent men) died in the midst of his vigorous, successful labors; both of them far more fit for God's work, and likely to win souls, and glorify God, than I am or ever was, however their greater light was partly kindled from my lesser. Yet did both these, under painful, consuming languishings of the flesh, die, as they had long lived, in the lively, triumphant praises of their Redeemer, and joyful desires and hopes of glory. And shall I, at seventy-six years of age, after such a life of unspeakable mercies, and almost fifty-three years of comfortable help in the service of my God, be now afraid of my reward, and shrink at the sentence of death, and still be desiring to stay here upon pretense of further service? We know not what is best for the church, as God doth; the church and the world are not

ours, but his; not our desires, but his will, must measure out its mercies. We are not so merciful as he is. It is not unmeet for us to desire many things which God will not give, nor seeth it meet to grant the particulars of such desires. Nothing ever lay so heavy on my heart as the sin and misery of mankind, and to think how much the world lieth in folly and wickedness! And for what can I pray so heartily as for the world's recovery? And it is his will that I should show a holy and universal love by praying, "Let thy name be hallowed, thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is done in heaven:" and yet, alas! how unlike is earth to heaven, and what ignorance, sin, confusions, and cruelties, here reign and prosper! And unless there be a wonderful change to be expected, even as by a general miracle, how little hope appeareth that ever these prayers should be granted in the things! It maketh us better to desire that others may be better; but God is the free disposer of his own gifts; and it seemeth to be his will, that the permitted ignorance and confusions of this world should help us the more to value and desire that world of light, love, and order, which he calleth us to prefer and hope for.

And if I am any way useful to the world, it is undeserved mercy that hath made me so, for which I must be thankful; but how long I shall be so is not my business to determine, but my Lord's. My many sweet and beautiful flowers arise and appear in their beauty and sweetness but for one summer's time, and they murmur not that they flourish for so short a space. The beasts, and birds, and fishes, which I feed on, do live till I will have them die; and as God will be served and pleased by wonderful variety at once of animals and vegetables, &c., so will he by many successive generations. If one flower fall or die, it sufficeth that others shall, summer after summer, arise from the same root; and if my pears, apples, plums, &c., fall or serve me when they are ripe, it sufficeth that not they, but others, the next year shall do the same: God will have other generations to succeed us. Let us thank him that we have had our time: and could we overcome the grand (too little observed) crime of *selfishness*, and could love others as ourselves, and God, as God, above all the world, it would comfort us at death, that others shall survive us, and the world shall continue, and God will be still God, and be glorified in his works: and love will say, I shall live in my successors, and I shall more than live in the life of the world, and yet most of all in the eternal life and glory of God.

And God, who made us not gods, but poor creatures, as it pleased him, doth know best our measures, and he will not try us with too long a life of temptations, lest we should grow too familiar where we should be strangers, and utterly strangers to our home. No

wonder if that world was ready for a deluge, by a deluge of sin, in which men lived to six, seven, eight, and nine hundred years of age. Had our great sensualists any hope of so long a life, they would be more like incarnate devils, and there would be no dwelling near them for the holy seed. If angels were among them, they would, like the Sodomites, seek furiously to abuse them.

Nor will God tire us out with too long a life of earthly sufferings. We think short cares, and fears, and sorrows, persecutions, sickness, and crosses, to be long, and shall we grudge at the wisdom and love which shorteneth them? Yea, though holy duty itself be excellent and sweet, yet the weakness of the flesh maketh us liable to weariness, and abateth the willingness of the spirit; and our wise and merciful God will not make our warfare, or our race, too long, lest we be wearied, and faint, and fall short of the prize. By our weariness, and complaints, and fears, and groans, one would think that we thought this life too long, and yet when we should yield to the call of God, we draw back as if we would have it everlasting.

Willingly submit, then, O my soul. It is not thou, but this flesh, that must be dissolved; this troublesome, vile, and corruptible flesh. It is but the other half of thy meat and drink, which thy presence kept longer uncorrupted, going after the excremental part. Thou diest not when man (the *compositum*) dieth, by thy departure. And as thou livest not to thyself, thou diest not to thyself: whether I live or die, I am the Lord's: he that set up the candle, knoweth how long he hath use for the light of it. Study thy duty, and work while it is day, and let God choose thy time, and willingly stand to his disposal. The gospel dieth not when I die. The church dieth not. The praises of God die not. The world dieth not, and perhaps it shall grow better, and those prayers shall be answered which seemed lost. Yea, and it may be some of the seed that I have sown, shall spring up to some benefit of the dark, unpeaceable world when I am dead. And is not this much of the end of life? And is not that life good which attaineth its end? If my end was to do good and glorify God, if good be done, and God glorified when I am dead, yea, though I were annihilated, is not my end attained? Feign not thyself to be God, whose interest (that is, the pleasing of his will) is the end of all things, and whose will is the measure of all created good. Feign not thyself to be all the world: God hath not lost his work: the world is not dissolved when I am dissolved. O, how strong and unreasonable a disease is this inordinate *selfishness*! Is not God's will infinitely better than mine, and fitter to be fulfilled? Choose the fulfilling of his will, and thou shalt always have thy choice. If a

man be well that can always have his will, let this always be thy will, that God's will may be done, and thou shalt always have it.

Lord, let thy servant depart in peace; even in thy peace, which passeth understanding, and which Christ, the Prince of peace, doth give, and nothing in the world can take away. O, give me that peace which beseemeth a soul, which is so near the harbor, even the world of endless peace and love, where perfect union (such as I am capable of) will free me from all the sins and troubles which are caused by the convulsions, divulsions, and confusions, of this divided, selfish world. Call home this soul by the encouraging voice of love, that it may joyfully hear, and say, 'It is my Father's voice.' Invite it to thee by the heavenly messenger. Attract it by the tokens and the foretastes of love. The messengers that invited me to the feast of grace, compelled me to come in without constraint. Thy effectual call did make me willing; and is not glory better than preparing grace? Shall I not come more willingly to the celestial feast? What was thy grace for, but to make me willing of glory, and the way to it? Why didst thou dart down thy beams of love, but to make me love thee, and to call me up to the everlasting centre? Was not the feast of grace as a sacrament of the feast of glory? Did I not take it in remembrance of my Lord until he come? Did not he that told me, "All things are ready," tell me also that "He is gone to prepare a place for us?" And it is his will that we shall be with him, and see his glory. They that are given him, and drawn to him by the Father, on earth, do come to Christ. Give, now, and draw my departing soul to my glorified Head; and, as I have glorified thee on earth, in the measure that thy grace hath prevailed in me, pardon the sins by which I have offended thee, and glorify me in the beholding and participation of the glory of my Redeemer. Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly, with fuller life, and light, and love, into this too dead, and dark, and disaffected soul, that it may come with joyful willingness unto thee.

Willingly depart, O lingering soul! It is from a Sodom, though in it there be righteous Lots, who yet are not without their woful blemishes! Hast thou so oft groaned for the general blindness and wickedness of the world, and art thou loath to leave it for a better? How oft wouldst thou have rejoiced to have seen but the dawning of a day of universal peace and reformation! And wouldst thou not see it where it shineth forth in fullest glory! Would a light at midnight have pleased thee so well? Hast thou prayed and labored for it so hard? And wouldst thou not see the sun? Will the things of heaven please thee no where but on earth, where they come in the least and weakest influences, and are terminated

in gross, terrene, obscure, and unkind recipients? Away, away; the vindictive flames are ready to consume this sinful world! Sinners, that blindly rage in sin, must quickly rage in the effects of sin and of God's justice. The pangs of lust prepared for these pangs! They are treasuring up wrath against this day. Look not, then, behind thee. Away from this unhappy world! Press on unto the mark; (Phil. iii.) "Looking towards, and hastening to the coming of the day of God;" 2 Pet. iii. 10—12.

As this world hath used thee, it would use thee still, and it will use others. If thou hast sped well in it, no thanks to it, but unto God. If thou hast had manifold deliverances, and marvelous preservations, and hast been fed with angel's food, love not this wilderness for it, but God and his angel, which was thy guide, protector, and deliverer.

And hath this troublesome flesh been so comfortable a companion to thee, that thou shouldst be so loath to leave it? Have thy pains, thy weariness, thy languishings, thy labors, thy cares and fears about this body, been pleasing to thee? And art thou loath that they should have an end? Didst thou not find a need of patience to undergo them? And of greater patience than mere nature gave thee? And canst thou hope now for better when nature faileth, and that an aged, consumed, more diseased body, should be a pleasanter habitation to thee than it was heretofore? If from thy youth up it hath been both a tempting and a troublesome thing to thee, surely, though it be less tempting, it will not be less troubling, when it is falling to the dust, and above ground savoreth of the grave! Had things sensible been never so pleasant in thy youth, and hadst thou glutted thyself in health with that sort of delight, in age thou art to say by nature, "I have no pleasure in them." Doth God in great mercy make pain and feebleness the harbingers of death, and wilt thou not understand their business? Doth he mercifully, beforehand, take away the pleasure of all fleshly things, and worldly vanities, that there may be nothing to relieve a departing soul; (as the shell breaketh when the bird is hatched, and the womb relaxed when the infant must be born,) and yet shall we stay when nothing holdeth us, and still be loath to come away? Wouldst thou dwell with thy beloved body in the grave, where it will rot and stink in loathsome darkness? If not, why should it now, in its painful languor, seem to thee a more pleasant habitation than the glorious presence of thy Lord? In the grave it will be at rest, and not tormented as now it is, nor wish, at night, O that it were morning! nor say at morning, When will it be night? And is this a dwelling fit for thy delight? Patience in it, while God will so try thee, is thy duty; but is such patience a better and sweeter life than rest and joy?

But, alas! how deaf is flesh to reason! Faith hath the reason which easily may shame all contrary reasoning, but sense is unreasonable, and especially this inordinate, tenacious love of present life. I have reason enough to be willing to depart, even much more willing than I am. Oh, that I could be as willing as I am convinced that I have reason to be! Could I love God as much as I know that I should love him, then I should desire to depart, and to be with Christ, as much as I know that I should desire it. But God, in nature, hath there laid upon me some necessity of aversion, (though the inordinateness came from sin,) else Christ had not so feared and deprecated the cup. Death must be a penalty, even where it is a gain, and therefore it must meet with some unwillingness; because we willingly sinned, we must unwillingly suffer. The gain is not the pain or dissolution in itself, but the happy consequents of it. All the faith and reason in the world will not make death to be no penalty, and therefore will not take away all unwillingness. No man ever yet reasoned or believed himself into a love of pain and death, as such; but seeing that the gain is unspeakably greater than the pain and loss, faith and holy reason may make our willingness to be greater than our unwillingness, and our hope and joy than our fear and sorrow. And it is the deep and effectual notice of goodness, which is God's way, in nature and grace, to change and draw the will of man. Come, then, my soul, and think believingly, what is best for thee. And wilt thou not love and desire most that which is certainly the best?

TO DEPART AND TO BE WITH CHRIST IS FAR BETTER, OR
RATHER TO BE CHOSEN.

To say and hear that it is far better to be with Christ, is not enough to make us willing. Words and notions are such instruments as God useth to work on the souls; but the convincing, satisfying, powerful light, and the inclining love, are other things. The soul now operateth *ut forma hominis*, on and with the corporeal spirits and organs, and it perceiveth now its own perceptions; but it is a stranger to the mode of its future action, when separated from the body, and can have no formal conception of such conceptions as yet it never had. And therefore, its thoughts of its future state must be analogical and general, and partly strange. But general notices, when certain, may be very powerful, and satisfy us in so much as is needful to our consent, and to such a measure of joy as is suitable to this earthly state. And such notices we have from the nature of the soul, with the nature of God; the course of providence, and government of mankind; the internal and external conflicts which we perceive about men's souls;

the testimony and promises of the word of God ; the testimony of conscience, with the witness of the sanctifying Spirit of Christ, and in it the earnest and the foretaste of glory, and the beginnings of life eternal here ; all which I have before considered.

The Socinians, who would interpret this of the state of resurrection only, against plain evidence, violate the text ; seeing Paul expressly speaketh of his gain by death, which will be his abode with Christ, and this upon his departure hence ; which (in 2 Cor. v. 7, 8.) he calleth his being absent from the body, and present with the Lord : and Christ, to the penitent thief, calleth his being with him in Paradise : and (Luke xvi.) in the parable of the steward, Christ intimateth to us, that wise preparers, when they go hence, are received into the everlasting habitations ; as he there further tells us Lazarus was in Abraham's bosom.

Goodness is *primaria et mensurans, vel secundaria et mensurata* : the first is God's perfect essence and will : the second is either properly and simply good, or analogical. The former is the creature's conformity to the will of God, or its pleasingness to his will : the latter is, 1. The greater, which is the welfare or perfection of the universe. 2. The lesser, which is the several parts of the universe, either, 1. In the nobler respect, as they are parts contributing to the perfection of the whole ; or, 2. In the lower respect, as they are perfect or happy in themselves ; or, 3. In the lowest respect of all, as they are good to their fellow-creatures which are below themselves.

Accordingly, it is far better to be with Christ, I. Properly and simply, as it is the fulfilling of God's will. II. Analogically, as it tendeth to the perfection of the universe and the church. III. And as it will be our own good or felicity. IV. And as it will be good to our inferior fellow-creatures ; though this last be most questionable, and seemeth not included in the meaning of this text. Somewhat of these in order.

I. It is an odious effect of idolatrous selfishness to acknowledge no goodness above our own felicity, and, accordingly, to make the goodness of God to be but formally his usefulness, benevolence, and beneficence, to his creatures, which is by making the creature the ultimate end, and God but the means ; to make the creature to be God, and deny God, indeed, while we honor his name ; as also it is to acknowledge no higher goodness formally in the creature, than in its own felicity as such ; as if neither the pleasing of God's will, nor the perfection of the church and world, were better than we are. We are not of ourselves, and therefore we are not chiefly for ourselves ; and therefore we have a higher good to love.

That is simply best which God willeth. Therefore, to live here is best whilst I do live here ; and to depart is best, when the time

of my departure cometh : that is best which is, for it is the work of God : the world cannot be better at this instant than it is, nor any thing better, which is of God, because it is as he willeth it to be ; but when God hath changed them, it will then be best that they are changed. Were there no other good in my departure hence, but this simple good, the fulfilling of God's will, my reason telleth me that I should be fully satisfied in it : but there is also a subordinate sort of good.

II. For my change will tend to the perfection of the universe ; even that material good or perfection, which is its aptitude for the use to which God hath created and doth preserve it : as all the parts, the modes, the situation, the motions of a clock, a watch, or other engine, do to the ends of the artificer. Though God hath not told me particularly, why every thing, and mode, and motion, is as it is, I know it is all done in perfect wisdom, and suited to its proper use and end. If the hen or bird knoweth how to make her nest, to lay her eggs secretly together, when and how to sit on them till they are hatched, and how to feed them, and preserve them, and when to forsake them, as sufficient for themselves without her help, &c ; if the bee knoweth when, and whence, and how to gather her honey and wax, and how to form the repository combs, and how to lay it up, and all the rest of her marvelous economy,—shall I think that God doth, he knoweth not what, or what is not absolutely the best ? Doth he want either skill, or will, or power ?

And should the stone grudge to be hewed, the brick to be burnt, the trees to be cut down, and sawed, and framed, the lead and iron to be melted, &c., when it is but to form an useful edifice, and to adapt and compose every part to the perfecting of the whole ?

Shall the waters grudge that they must glide away, and the plants that they must die, and half die every winter, and the fruits and flowers that they must fall, or the moon that it must have its changing motions, or the sun that it must rise and set so oft, &c., when all is but the action and order which maketh up that harmony and perfection which was designed by the Creator, and is pleasing to his will ?

III. But lawful self-love is yet further herein gratified : the goodness expressed in the text is that analogical, subordinate good, which is *mihi bonum*, my own felicity, and that which tendeth thereunto : it is most reasonable to love God best, and that next which is likest him, (if known,) and why should it not be the easiest and the sweetest ? But experience findeth it so easy to love ourselves, that, certainly, if I firmly believe that it is best for me, I shall desire to depart, and to be with Christ. And have I not reason to believe it ?

The reasons of it I will consider in this order: *I.* The general reason from the efficient and the means. *II.* The final reasons. *III.* The constitutive reasons from the state of my intellect, and its action and fruition there. *IV.* The constitutive reasons from the state of my will. *V.* The constitutive reasons from my practice there, leaving out those which the resurrection will give me; because I am speaking but of my present departure unto Christ.

I. The General Reasons, &c.

1. That is best for me which love itself, my heavenly Father, designed, and chooseth, for my good. I hope I shall never dare to think, or say, that he is mistaken, or that he wanted skill or love, or that I could have chosen better for myself than he doth, if he had left all to my choice. Many a time the wise and good will of God hath crossed my foolish rebellious will on earth; and afterwards, I have still perceived that it was best; usually for myself, but always for a higher good than mine. It is not an enemy, nor a tyrant, that made me, that hath preserved me, and that calls me hence. He hath not used me as an enemy: the more I tried him, the better I have found him: had I better obeyed his ruling will, how happy had I been! And is not his disposing and rewarding will as good? Man's work is like man, and evil corrupteth it; but God's work is like God, and uncorrupted. If I should not die till my dearest friend would have it, much more till I myself would choose it, (not constrained by misery,) I should rejoice, and think my life were safe! O foolish, sinful soul! if I take it not to be far better to be at God's choice, than at my own, or any man's; and if I had not rather that he choose the time than I!

Be of good cheer, then, O my soul! it is thy Father's voice that calleth thee hence; his voice that called thee into the world, and bid thee live; that called thee out of a state of sin and death, and bid thee live hereafter unto him; that called thee so oft from the grave, and, forgiving thy sins, renewed thy strength, restored thee to the comforts of his house and service; and that so graciously led thee through this howling wilderness, and brought thee almost to the sight of the promised land. And wilt thou not willingly go, when infinite, fatherly love doth call thee? Art thou not desirous of his presence? Art thou afraid to go to him who is the only cure of thy fears? What was it but this glory to which he did finally elect thee? Where dost thou read that he elected thee to the riches and honors of this world, or to the pleasures of the flesh? But he elected us in Christ to the heavenly inheritance; Eph. i. 3, 4, &c. Indeed, he elected thee also to bear the cross, and to manifold sufferings here; but is it that which thou prefer-

rest before the crown? That was but as a means unto the kingdom, that thou mightest be conformed to Christ, and reign with him when thou hast suffered with him. If God choose thee to blessedness, refuse it not thyself, nor behave thyself like a refuser.

2. And, surely, that state is my best which my Savior purchased and promised me as best; as he bought me not with silver and gold, so neither to silver and gold: did he live and die to make me rich or advanced in the world? Surely his incarnation, merits, sacrifice, and intercession, had a low design, if that were all! And who hath more of these than they that have least of Christ? But he purchaseth us to an incorruptible crown; to an inheritance undefiled, that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for us, that are kept, by God's power, through faith unto salvation; 1 Pet. i. And is it heaven that cost so dear a price for me, and is the end of so wonderful a design of grace, and shall I be unwilling now to receive the gift?

3. That, sure, is best for me, for which God's Holy Spirit is preparing me; that for which he is given to believers; and that which is the end of all his holy operations on my soul. But it is not to love this world, that he is persuading me from day to day; but to come off from such love, and to set my heart on the things above. Is it to love this life and fleshly interest, this vanity and vexation, or, rather, to love the invisible perfection, that this blessed Spirit hath done so much to work my heart? And would I now undo all, or cross and frustrate all his operations? Hath grace been so long preparing me for glory, and shall I be loath to take possession of it? If I am not willing, I am not yet sufficiently prepared.

4. If heaven be not better for me than earth, God's word and ordinances have been all in vain. Surely that is my best which is the gift of the better covenant, and which is secured to me by so many sealed promises, and which I am directed to by so many sacred precepts, doctrines and examples; and for which I have been called to hear, and read, and meditate, and pray, and watch so long. Was it the interest of the flesh on earth, or a longer life of worldly prosperity, which the gospel covenant secured to me; which the sacraments and Spirit sealed to me; which the Bible was written to direct me to; which ministers preached to me; which my books were written for; which I prayed for; and for which I served God? Or was it not for his grace on earth, and glory in heaven? And is it not better for me to have the end of all these means, than lose them all, and lose my hopes? Why have I used them, if I would not attain their end?

5. That is my best state, which all the course of God's fatherly providences tend to: all his sweeter mercies, and all his sharper corrections, are to make me partaker of his holiness, and to lead

me to glory in the way that my Savior and all his saints have gone before me: all things work together for the best to me, by preparing me for that which is best, indeed. Both calms and storms are to bring me to this harbor: if I take them but for themselves, and this present life, I mistake them, and understand them not, but unthankfully vilify them, and lose their end, and life, and sweetness: every word and work of God; every day's mercies, and changes, and usages, do look at heaven, and intend eternity. God leadeth me no other way: if I follow him not, I forsake my hope in forsaking him: if I follow him, shall I be unwilling to be at home, and come to the end of all this way?

6. Surely that is best for me which God hath required me principally to value, love, and seek, and that as the business of all my life, referring all things else thereto: that this is my duty, I am fully certain, as is proved elsewhere, and before. Is my business in the world only for the things of this world? How vain a creature, then, were man; and how little were the difference between waking and sleeping! Life and death: no wonder if he that believeth that there is no life but this to seek or hope for, do live in uncomfortable despair, and only seek to palliate his misery with the brutish pleasures of a wicked life, and if he stick at no villany which his fleshly lusts incline him to; especially tyrants and multitudes who have none but God to fear. It is my certain duty to seek heaven with all the fervor of my soul, and diligence of my life; and is it not best to find it?

7. That must needs be best for me, which all other things must be forsaken for: it is folly to forsake the better for the worse: but Scripture, reason, and conscience, tell me, that all this world, when it stands in competition, or opposition, should be forsaken for heaven; yea, for the least hopes of it: a possible everlasting glory should be preferred before a certainly perishing vanity. I am sure this life will shortly be nothing to me; and therefore it is next to nothing now. And must I forsake all for my everlasting hopes, and yet be unwilling to pass unto the possession of them?

8. That is like to be our best which is our maturest state. Nature carrieth all things towards their perfection: our apples, pears, grapes, and every fruit, are best when they are ripe; and although they then hasten to corruption, that is, through the incapacity of the corporal materials any longer to retain the vegetative spirit, which is not annihilated at its separation; and being not made for its own felicity, but for man's, its ripeness is the state in which man useth it, before it doth corrupt of itself, and that its corruption may be for his nutriment; and the spirits and best matter of his said food doth become his very substance, And doth

God cause saints to grow up unto ripeness, only to perish and drop down unto useless rottenness? It is not credible. Though our bodies become but like our filthiest excrements, our souls return to God that gave them: and though he need them not, he useth them in their separated state; and that to such heavenly uses as the heavenly maturity and mellowness hath disposed them to. Seeing, then, love hath ripened me for itself, shall I not willingly drop into its hand?

9. That is like to be the best which the wisest and holiest, in all ages of the world, have preferred before all, and have most desired; and which also almost all mankind do acknowledge to be best at last. It is not like that all the best men in the world should be most deceived, and be put upon fruitless labors and sufferings by this deceit, and be undone by their duty; and that God should, by such deceits, rule all (or almost all) mankind; and also that the common notices of human nature, and conscience's last and closet documents, should be all in vain. But it is past all doubt, that no men usually are worse than those that have no belief or hopes of any life but this; and that none are so holy, just, and sober, so charitable to others, and so useful to mankind, as those that firmliest believe and hope for the state of immortality: and shall I fear that state which all that were wise and holy, in all ages, have preferred and desired?

10. And it is not unlike that my best state is that which my greatest enemies are most against: and how much Satan doth to keep me and other men from heaven; and how much worldly honor, and pleasure, and wealth, he could afford us to accomplish it, I need not here again be copious in reciting, having said so much of it in the 'Treatise of Infidelity.' And shall I be, towards myself, so much of Satan's mind? He would not have me come to heaven; and shall I also be unwilling? All these things tell me that it is best to be with Christ.

II. *The Final Reasons.*

1. Is it not far better to dwell with God in glory, than with sinful men, in such a world as this? Though he be every where, his glory, which we must behold to our felicity, and the perfecting operations and communications of his love, are in the glorious world, and not on earth. As the eye is made to see the light, and then to see other things by the light, so is man's mind made to see God, and to love him; and other things, as in, by, and for him. He that is our beginning is our end; and our end is the first motive of all moral action, and for it, it is all that means are used; and the end attained is the rest of souls. How oft hath my

soul groaned under the sense of distance, and darkness, and estrangement from God! How oft hath it looked up, and gasped after him, and said, 'Oh! when shall I be nearer and better acquainted with my God?' "As the hart panteth after the water-brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God: my soul thirsteth for God, for the living God: when shall I come and appear before God?" Psalm xlii. 1. And would I not have my prayers heard, and my desires granted? What else is the sum of lawful prayers, but God himself? If I desire any thing more than God, what sinfulness is in those desires, and how sad is their signification! How oft have I said, "Whom have I in heaven but thee, and there is none on earth that I desire besides thee! It is good for me to draw near to God." Psalm lxxiii. 25, 28. Woe to me, if I did dissemble! If not, why should my soul draw back? Is it because that death stands in the way? Do not my fellow-creatures die for my daily food; and is not my passage secured by the love of my Father, and the resurrection and intercession of my Lord? Can I see the light of heavenly glory in this darksome shell and womb of flesh?

2. All creatures are more or less excellent and glorious, as God is more or less operative and refulgent in them, and, by that operation, communicateth most of himself unto them. Though he be immense and indivisible, his operations and communications are not equal: and that is said to be nearest to him which hath most of those operations on it; and that without the intervenient casualty of any second, created cause; and so all those are in their order near unto him, as they have noblest natures, and fewest intervenient causes. Far am I from presuming to think that I am, or shall be, the best and noblest of God's creatures, and so that I shall be so near him as to be under the influx of no second or created causes; of which more anon. But to be as near as my nature was ordained to approach, is but to attain the end and perfection of my nature.

3. And as I must not look to be the nearest to him, as he is the first efficient, no more must I, as he is the first dirigent, or governing cause. As now I am under the government of his officers on earth, I look forever to be under sub-governors in heaven. My glorified Savior must be my Lord and Ruler, and who else under him I know not. If angels are not equal in perfection, nor, as is commonly supposed, equal in power, nor without some regimental order among themselves, I must not conclude that no created angel or spirit shall have any government over me, but it will be so pure and divine, as that the blessed effects of God's own government will be sweetly powerful therein. If the law was given by angels, and the angel of God was in the burning bush, and the angel conducted the people through the wilderness, and yet all

these things are ascribed to God, much more near and glorious will the divine regiment there be, whoever are the administrators.

4. And as I must expect to be under some created, efficient and dirigent causes there, so must I expect to have some subordinate ends; else there would not be a proportion and harmony in causalities. Whatever nobler creatures are above me, and have their causalities upon me, I must look to be finally for these nobler creatures. When I look up and think what a world of glorious beings are now over me, I dare not presume to think that I shall finally, any more than receptively, be the nearest unto God, and that I am made for none but him. I find here that I am made, and ruled, and sanctified, for the public or common good of many as above my own, of which I am past doubt; and I am sure that I must be, finally, for my glorified Redeemer; and for what other spiritual beings, or intelligences, that are above me, little do I know: and God hath so ordered all his creatures, as that they are mutually ends and means for and to one another, though not in an equality, nor in the same respects. But whatever nearer ends there will be, I am sure that he who is the first efficient, and dirigent, will be the ultimate, final cause; and I shall be, in this respect, as near him as is due to the rank and order of my nature. I shall be useful to the ends which are answerable to my perfection.

5. And if it be the honor of a servant to have an honorable master, and to be appointed to the most honorable work; if it be some honor to a horse above swine, or a worm, or fly, that he serveth more nearly for the use of man, yea, for a prince, will it not be also my advancement to be ultimately for God, and subordinately for the highest created natures, and this in such services as are suitable to my spiritual and heavenly state?

6. For I am far from thinking that I shall be above service, and have none to do, for activity will be my perfection and my rest: and all such activity must be regular in harmony, and order of causes, and for its proper use; and what, though I know not now fully what service it is that I must do, I know it will be good and suitable to the blessed state which I shall be in; and it is enough that God and my Redeemer know it; and that I shall know it in due time, when I come to practice it; of which more afterward.

7. The inordinate love of this body and present composition seduceth souls to think that all their use and work is for its maintenance and prosperity, and when the soul hath done that, and is separated from flesh, it hath nothing to do, but must lie idle, or be as nothing, or have no considerable work or pleasure. As if there were nothing in the whole world, but this little fluid mass of matter, for a soul to work upon; as if itself, and all the creatures, and

God, were nothing, or no fit objects for a soul ; and why not hereafter, as well as now ? or as if that which, in our compounded state, doth operate on and by its organs, had no other way of operation without them ; as if the musician lost all his power, or were dead, when his instrument is out of tune, or broken, and could do nothing else but play on that ; as if the fiery part of the candle were annihilated, or transmutate, as some philosophers imagine, when the candle goeth out, and were not fire, and in action still ; or as if that sunbeam which I shut out, or which passeth from our horizon, were annihilated, or did nothing, when it shineth not with us. Had it no other individual to illuminate, or to terminate its beams or action, were it nothing to illuminate the common air ? Though I shall not always have a body to operate in and upon, I shall always have God and a Savior, and a world of fellow-creatures ; and when I shine not in this lantern, and see not by these spectacles, nor imaginarily in a glass, I shall yet see things suitable intuitively, and as face to face. That which is essentially life, as a living principle, will live ; and that which is essentially an active, intellectual, volitive principle, force, and virtue, will still be such while it is itself, and is not annihilated, or changed into another thing, (which is not to be feared ;) and that which is such can never want an object till all things be annihilated.

8. Reason assureth me, that were my will now what it should be, and fully obsequious herein to my understanding, to fulfill God's will would be the fulfilling of my own will ; for my will should perfectly comply with his, and to please him perfectly would be my perfect pleasure : and it is the unreasonable adhesion to this body, and sinful selfishness, which maketh any one think otherwise now. I am sure that my soul shall live, for it is life itself ; and I am sure that I shall live to God, and that I shall fulfill and please his blessed will : and this is, as such, incomparably better than my felicity, as such ; and yet so far as I am pleased in so doing, it will be my felicity.

9. I begin now to think, that the strange love which the soul hath to this body (so far as it is not inordinate) is put into us of God, partly to signify to us the great love which Christ hath to his mystical, political body, and to every member of it, even the least : he will gather all his elect out of the world, and none that come to him shall be shut out, and none that are given him shall be lost : as his flesh is to them meat indeed, and his blood is to them drink indeed, and he nourisheth them for life eternal ; (his Spirit in them, turning the sacrament, the word, and Christ himself, *in esse objectivo*, as believed in, into spirit and life to us, as the soul and our natural spirits turn our food into flesh and blood, and spirits, which, in a dead body, or any lifeless repository, it would never be ;) so

as we delight in the ease and prosperity of our body, and each member, and have pleasure in the pleasant food that nourisheth it, and other pleasant objects which accommodate it; Christ also delighteth in the welfare of his church, and of all the faithful, and is pleased when they are fed with good and pleasant food, and when hereby they prosper: Christ loveth the church, not only as a man must love his wife, but as we love our bodies; and no man ever hated his own flesh; Eph. v. 27, &c. And herein I must allow my Savior the preëminence, to overgo me in powerful, faithful love: he will save me better from pain and death than I can save my body; and will more inseparably hold me to himself. If it please my soul to dwell in such a house of clay, and to operate on so mean a thing as flesh, how greatly will it please my glorified Lord to dwell with his glorified body, the triumphant church, and to cherish and bless each member of it! It would be a kind of death to Christ to be separated from his body, and to have it die. Whether Augustine, and the rest of the fathers, were in the right or no, who thought, that as our bodies do not only shed their hairs, but, by sickness and waste, lose much of their very flesh; so Christ's militant body doth not only lose hypocrites, but also some living, justified members; yet, certain it is, that confirmed members, and most certain, that glorified members, shall not be lost: heaven is not a place for Christ or us to suffer such loss in. And will Christ love me better than I love my body? Will he be more loath to lose me than I am to lose a member, or to die? Will he not take incomparably greater pleasure in animating and actuating me forever, than my soul doth in animating and actuating this body? O, then, let me long to be with him! And though I am naturally loath to be absent from the body, let me be, by his Spirit, more unwilling to be absent from the Lord; and though I would not be unclothed, had not sin made it necessary, let me not groan to be clothed upon with my heavenly habitation, and to become the delight of my Redeemer, and to be perfectly loved by love itself.

10. And even this blessed receptivity of my soul, in terminating the love and delight of my glorified Head, must needs be a felicity to me. The insensible creatures are but beautified by the sun's communication of its light and heat; but the sensitives have also the pleasure of it. Shall my soul be senseless? Will it be a clod or stone? Shall that, which is now the form of man, be then more lifeless, senseless, or incapable, than the form of brutes is now? Doubtless, it will be a living, perceiving, sensible recipient of the felicitating love of God, and my Redeemer; I shall be loved as a living spirit, and not as a dead and senseless thing, that doth not comfortably perceive it.

11. And if I must rejoice with my fellow-servants that rejoice,

shall I not be glad to think that my blessed Lord will rejoice in me, and in all his glorified ones? Union will make his pleasure to be much mine; and it will be aptly said by him to the faithful soul, "Enter thou into the joy of thy Lord;" Matt. xxv. 21. His own active joy will objectively be ours, as ours will be efficiently his, or from him. Can that be an ill condition to me, in which my Lord will most rejoice? It is best to him, and, therefore, best to me.

12. And the heavenly society will joyfully welcome a holy soul. If there be now "joy in heaven among the angels, for one sinner that repenteth," (Luke xv. 10,) who hath yet so little holiness, and so much sin, what joy will there be over a perfected, glorified soul! Surely, if our angels there behold our Father's face, they will be glad, in season, of our company. The angels that carried Lazarus to Abraham's bosom, no doubt rejoiced in their work, and their success. And is the joy of angels, and the heavenly host, as nothing to me? Will not love and union make their joy to be my own, if love here must make all my friends and neighbors comforts to become my own? And as their joy, according to their perfection, is greater than any that I am now capable of, so the participation of so great a joy of theirs will be far better than to have my little separated apartment. Surely, that will be my best condition, which angels and blessed spirits will be best pleased in, and I shall rejoice most in that which they most rejoice in.

III. *The Constitutive Reasons from the Intellectual State.*

Though the tempter would persuade men, because of the case of infants in the womb, apoplectics, &c., that the understanding will be but an unactive power, when separated from these corporeal organs, I have seen before sufficient reasons to repel this temptation. I will suppose, that it will not have such a mode of conception as it hath now by these organs; but, 1. The soul will be still essentially a vital, intellectual substance, disposed to act naturally; and that is to those acts which it is formally inclined to, as fire to illuminate and heat. And as it cannot die, (while it is what it is in essence,) because it is life itself, that is, the vital substance; so it cannot but be intellectual, (as to an inclined power,) because it is such essentially; though God can change, or annihilate any thing, if he would. 2. And it will be among a world of objects. 3. And it will still have its dependence on the first cause, and receive his continual actuating influx. 4. And no man can give the least show of true reason, to prove that it shall cease sensation, (whether the sensitive faculties be in the same substance which is intellectual, which is most probable, or in one conjunct, as some

imagine,) though the species and modes of sensation cease, which are denominated from the various organs.

5. Yea, no man can prove that the departing soul doth not carry with it its igneous spirits, which, in the body, it did immediately actuate. If it were ever so certain that those Greek fathers were mistaken (as well as hypocrites) who took the soul itself to be a sublime, intellectual fire.

And as to the objection some hold, that the soul preëxisted before it was in the body; others, and most, that it then received its first being: if the first were true, it would be true that the soul had its intellectual activity before, though the soul itself, incorporate, remember it not, because it operateth but *ut forma hominis*, (and its oblivion they take to be part of its penalty,) and they that think it a *radius* of the *anima mundi vel systematis*, must think that then it did intellectually animate *hunc mundum, vel mundi partem*: and to do so again, is the worst they can conjecture of it. As the rays of the sun, which heat a burning-glass, and by it set a candle on fire, are the same rays still diffused in the air, and illuminating, heating, and moving it, and terminated on some other body, and not annihilated, or debilitated, when their contracted operation ceaseth by breaking the glass, or putting out the candle; and as the spirit of a tree still animateth the tree, when it retires from the leaves, and lets them fall. But this being an unproved imagination of men's own brains, we have no further use of it, than to confute themselves. But if the soul existed not till its incorporation, what wonder if it operate but *ut forma*, when it is united to the body for that use? What wonder if its initial operations, like a spark of fire in tinder, or the first lighting of a candle, be weak, and scarce by us perceptible? What wonder if it operate but to the uses that the creation did appoint it; and first, as vegetative, fabricate its own body, as the maker's instrument, and then feel, and then understand? And what wonder if it operate no further than objects are admitted? And, therefore, what wonder if, in apoplexies, &c., such operations are intercepted? But the departing soul is, (1.) In its maturity. (2.) No more united to this body, and so not confined to sense and imagination in its operations, and the admission of its objects. (3.) And it is *sub ratione meriti*, and, as a governed subject, is ordinate to its reward; which it was not capable of receiving in the womb, or in an apoplexy. And, as we have the reasons before alledged to hold, (1.) That it shall not be annihilated. (2.) Nor dissolved. (3.) Nor lose its essential faculties or powers. (4.) Nor those essential powers be continued useless by the wise and merciful Creator, though, by natural revelation, we know not in what manner they shall act, whether on any other body, and by what conjunction, and how far; so by su-

pernatural revelation we are assured, that there is a reward for the righteous, and that holy souls are still members of Christ, and live because he liveth, and that, in the day of their departure, they shall be with him in Paradise, and being absent from the body, shall be present with the Lord; and that Christ, therefore, died, rose, and revived, that he might be Lord both of the dead and of the living; that is, of those that, being dead, hence do live with him, and of those that yet live in the body; for he that said, "God is not the God of the dead, but of the living;" that is, stands not related to them as his people, as a king to his subjects, is not himself the Lord of the absolute dead, but of the living.

Therefore, (as *Contaremus* against *Pomponatius de Immortal. Anim.* saith,) the immortality of the soul is provable by the light of nature; but the manner of its future operation must be known by faith. And blessed be the Father of spirits, and our Redeemer, who hath sent and set up this excellent light, by which we see further than purblind infidels can do!

But I deny not but even the Scripture itself doth tell us but little of the manner of our intellection when we are out of the body; and it is not improbable that there is more imperfection in this mode of notional, organical, abstractive knowledge which the soul exerciseth in the body, than most consider of. And that, as the eye hath the visive faculty in sleep, and when we wink, and an internal action of the visive spirits, (no doubt,) and yet seeth not any thing without till the eyelids are opened, (and was not made to see its own sight,) so the soul in the body is as a winking eye to all things that are not, by the sense and imagination, intromitted, or brought within its reach. And whether (*sicut non video vinum, neque facultatem neque substantiam videntem, videndo tamen certo percipio me videre*, so it may be said, *Non intelligo immediate ipsam intellectionem, neque facultatem, aut substantiam intelligentem. Intelligendo tamen certo percipio me intelligere, quia actus intellectus in spiritus sensitivos operans sentitur*; or whether we must further say, with Ackam, that *Intellectus tum intuitivè tum abstractivè se intelligit*, I leave to wiser men to judge, but I am very suspicious that the body is more a lantern to the soul than some will admit; and that this *Lusus notionum secundarum*, or abstractive knowledge of things by organical images, names and notions, is occasioned by the union of the soul with the body *ut forma*, and is that childish knowledge which the apostle saith shall be done away. And how much of man's fall might consist in such a knowing of good and evil, I cannot tell, or in the overvaluing such a knowledge. And I think that when vain philosophy at Athens had called the thoughts and desires of mankind from great realities to the logical and philological game at words and notions, it was

Socrates' wisdom to call them to more concerning studies, and Paul's greater wisdom to warn men to take heed of such vain philosophy, and to labor to know God and Jesus Christ, and the things of the Spirit, and not to overvalue this ludicrous, dreaming, worldly wisdom. And if I have none of this kind of notional, childish knowledge when I am absent from the body, the glass and spectacles may then be spared, when I come to see with open face, or as face to face. Our future knowledge is usually, in Scripture, called seeing. "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God;" Matt. v. 8. "We shall see face to face;" 1 Cor. xiii. 12. "We shall see him as he is;" 1 John iii. 2. "Father, I will that those which thou hast given me be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory which thou hast given me," &c.; John xvii. 24. And intuitive knowledge of all things, as in themselves immediately, is a more excellent sort of knowledge than this, by similitudes, names, and notions, which our learning now consisteth in, and is but an art acquired by many acts and use.

If the sun were, as the heathens thought it, an intellective animal, and its emitted rays were vitally visive, and when one of those rays were received by prepared seminal matter, (as in insects,) it became the soul of an inferior animal,—in this case, the said ray would operate in that insect, or animal, but according to the capacity of the recipient matter; whereas the sun itself, by all its emitted rays, would see all things intellectually, and with delight, and when that insect were dead, that ray would be what it was, an intellective, intuitive emanation. And though the soul, in flesh, do not know itself how it shall be united to Christ, and to all other holy souls, and to God himself, nor how near, or just of what sort that union will be, yet united it will be, and therefore will participate accordingly of the universal light or understanding to which it is united. The soul now, as it is, or operateth, in the foot or hand, doth not understand, but only as it is, and operateth, in the head. And yet the same soul which is in the hand, understandeth in the head, and the soul operateth not so selfishly or dividedly in the hand as to repine there because it understandeth not there; but it is quiet in that it understandeth in the head, and performeth its due operation in the hand. But this diversity of operations seemeth to be from the organs, and body's use, or need; but souls dismissed from the body seem to be as all eye, or intuitive light. Therefore, though it might content us to say that our Head seeth all things, and we are united to him, yet we may say further, that we ourselves shall see God, and all things that are meet for us to see.

And seeing it is most certain that the superior glorious regions are full of blessed spirits, who do see God and one another, having

much more perfect operations than we have, (whose effects we mortals find here below,) why should I, that find an intellective nature in myself, make any doubt of my more perfect operations when I am dismissed hence, being satisfied that a soul will not lose its simple essence? Either those superior spirits have ethereal bodies to act in (or are such themselves) or not. If they are or have such, why should I doubt of the like, and think that my substance or vehicle will not be according to the region of my abode? If not, why should I think that my departed soul may not know or see without an igneous or ethereal body or vehicle, as well as all those worlds of spirits? And the certainty of apparitions, possessions, and witches, do tell us, not only that there are such inhabitants of other regions, ordinarily invisible to us, but also that we are in the way to that happiness or misery which is in our invisible state.

These things reviewed, (being partly mentioned before,) assuring me that I shall have actual intellection in my separated state, the region, with the objects, but, above all, the Holy Scriptures, will tell me, as much as it is meet that I should here know, what it is that I shall intuitively understand. The apostle (1 Cor. xiii. 10—12.) doth distinguish our knowing in part, and knowing perfectly, knowing as a child, and as a man, knowing darkly and enigmatically, as in a glass, and knowing face to face as we are known. The great question is, when this time of perfection is; whether he mean at death, or at the resurrection. If the observation of Dr. Hammond and Mr. Beverly, in his 'Great Soul of Man,' hold, that *ἀνάστασις* in Scripture, when 'the flesh or body' is not joined with it, signifies that life which the soul doth enter upon immediately after our death, and so that the soul hath that (after living) which is signified by the very word which we translate *resurrection*, then it will lead men to think that there is less difference between man's state at his first departure, and at his last resurrection, than most think, even than Calvin himself thought. But the difference between our first and last state of after-life or resurrection cannot be now distinctly known. What difference there is now between Enoch, Elias, and those who rose at Christ's resurrection, and the rest of the saints, even the spirits of the perfected just, and whether the first have as much greater glory than the rest, as it is conceived that we shall have at the resurrection above that which immediately followeth death, what mortal man can tell? I am past doubt that flesh and blood (formally so called, and not only *ab accidente*, as sinful) shall not inherit the kingdom of God, (*vid.* Hammond *in loc.*) but that our natural bodies shall be made spiritual bodies: and how a spiritual body differeth from a spirit or soul, I pretend not well to under-

stand, but must stay till God, by experience, or fuller light, inform me. But surely the difference is not like to be so great, as that a soul in flesh shall know in part, and a soul in a spiritual body shall know perfectly, and a soul between both shall not know at all. If it be perfection which we shall have in our spiritual body, it is like that we are nearer to that perfection, in knowledge and felicity, while we are between both, than when we are in the flesh.

And sure a soul that (even Solomon saith) goeth upward, and to God that gave it, is liker to know God than that which is terminated in flesh, and operateth *ut forma*, according to its capacity and state; and a soul that is with Christ, is liker to know Christ, and the Father in him, than that which is present with the body, and absent from the Lord. What less can the promise of being with him signify?

And, i. As to the kind of knowledge, how excellent and more satisfactory a way will that of intuition, or intellective sense, be, than is our present way of abstraction, similitudes, and signs! What abundance of time, thoughts and labor, doth it cost us now to learn our grammar, our rhetoric and our logic! Our *artes loquendi, dicendi* and *disserendi*; to learn our wordy rules and axioms, in metaphysics, physics, &c.! And when we have learned them all, (if all can be learned,) how little the nearer are many to the knowing of the signified realities! We oft get but a set of words to play with, to take up our time, and divert us from the matter; even as carnal men use the creatures which signify God, and are made to lead them up to him, to entangle them, and be the greatest and most pernicious diversion of their souls from God; so do too many learned men do by their organical, signal knowledge. They use it as man do cards, and romances, and plays, to delight their fancies; but they know less of the things that are worth their knowing than many unlearned persons do, as I said before. Had not much of the Athenian learning been then a mere game, for men to play away their precious time at, and to grow proud of, while they were ignorant of saving realities, Christ and his apostles had not so much neglected it as they did, nor Paul so much warned men to take heed of being deceived by that vain kind of philosophy, in which he seemeth to me to have greater respect to the universally esteemed Athenian arts, than, as Dr. Hammond thought, to the mere gnostic pretensions.

This poor, dreaming, signal, artificial knowledge is, 1. Costly. 2. Uncertain. 3. Contentious. 4. Unsatisfactory, in comparison of intuitive knowledge.

1. It is costly, as to the hard labor and precious time which must be laid out for it, as aforesaid. We grow old in getting us horses, and boots, and spurs, for our journey, and it is well if we

begin it at the last; like a man that would study the new-found planets, and the shape of Saturn's and Jupiter's satellites, and the *Viam Lacteam*, &c.; and he spends his whole life in getting him the best tubes, or telescopes, and never useth them to his ends; or like one that, instead of learning to write, doth spend his life in getting the best ink, paper and pens; or rather like one that learneth to write and print exactly, and not to understand what any of his words do signify. Men take their spectacles instead of eyes.

2. And when this learning is got, how uncertain are we whether the words have no ambiguity; whether they give us the true notice of the speaker's mind, and of the matter spoken of! As I said before, what penury, and yet redundancy of words, have we; of how various and uncertain signification; changed by custom, or arbitrary design; sometimes by the vulgar use, and sometimes by learned men, that, being conscious of the defectiveness of the speaking art, are still tampering, and attempting to amend it! And some men speak obscurely on purpose to raise in their readers a conceit of their subtle and sublime conceptions. And he that understandeth things most clearly, and speaketh them most plainly, (which are the parts of true learning,) shall have much ado to get the matter out of dark and bewildering uncertainties, and to make others understand both it and him.

3. And hence come the greatest part of the contentions of the world, which are hottest among men that most pretend to wordy knowledge; as in traffic and converse, the more men and business we have to do with, usually the more quarrels and differences we have; so the more of this wordy learning, instead of realities, men pretend to, the more disputes and controversies they make; and the instruments of knowledge prove the instruments of error and contention. And, alas! how many applauded volumes are the snares and troubles of the world! and how great a part of our libraries are vain janglings, and strife of words, and traps for the more ingenious sort, that will not be taken with cards and dice, robbing us of our time, destroying our love, depressing our minds, that should ascend to God, and diverting them from the great and holy things which should be the matter of our thoughts and joys; and filling the church with sects and strife, while every one striveth for the preëminence of his wit and notions, and few strive for holy love, and unity, and good works!

4. And all this while, alas! too many learned men do but lick the outside of the glass, and leave the wine within untasted. To know God and Christ, and heaven and holiness, do give the soul a nourishing and strengthening kind of pleasure, like that of the appetite in its food; but this game at words is but a knowing of images, signs and shadows, and so is but an image and shadow of

true knowledge. It is not that grace which Austin's definition saith, *Nemo male utitur*; but it is that which the sanctified use well, and the unsanctified are puffed up by, and use to the opposition of truth, the ostentation of a foolish wit, and the deceit of their own souls. And if it be sanctified knowledge, it is but mediate, in order to our knowledge of things thus signified; and it is the real good which contenteth and beatifieth, though the notions may be a subordinate recreation; and intuition feasteth on these realities.

ii. And as to the objects of this intuition, their excellency will be the excellency of our knowledge. 1. I shall know God better. 2. I shall know the universe better. 3. I shall know Christ better. 4. I shall know the church, his body, better, with the holy angels. 5. I shall better know the methods and perfection of the Scripture, and all God's dirigent word and will. 6. I shall know the methods and sense of disposing Providence better. 7. I shall know the divine benefits, which are the fruits of love, better. 8. I shall know myself better. 9. I shall better know every fellow-creature, which I am concerned to know. 10. And I shall better know all that evil, sin, Satan, and misery, from which I am delivered.

1. Aquinas, and many others, took it for the chief, natural proof of the soul's immortality, that man, by nature, desireth not only to know effects, and second causes, but to rise up to the knowledge of the first cause; and, therefore, was made for such knowledge in the state of his perfection; but grace hath much more of this desire than nature. Not that we must not be content to be without a great deal of knowledge, which would be unmeet for us, useless, troublesome, or dangerous to us; nor must we aspire to that which is above our capacity, and to know the unsearchable things of God; but not to know God, is to know nothing, and to have an understanding worse than none. I presume not to pry into the secrets of the Almighty, nor to pretend to know more of God than, indeed, I do; but O that I might know more of his perfections, of his will, and love, and ways, with that knowledge which is eternal life! Blessed be that love that sent the Son of God from heaven, to reveal him to us in the gospel, as he hath done; but all that hear the same words, and believe them, have not the same degree of light or faith. If an angel from heaven came down on earth to tell us all of God that we would know, and might lawfully desire and ask him, who would not turn his back on libraries, and universities, and learned men, to go and discourse with such a messenger? What travel should I think too far, what cost too great, for one hour's talk with such a messenger? But we must have here but such intimations as will exercise faith, and excite desire, and try us under the

temptations of the world and flesh. The glorious light is the reward of the victory obtained by the conduct of the light of grace. God, in great mercy, even here, beginneth the reward. They that are true to the initial light, and faithfully follow on to know the Lord, do find, usually, such increase of light (not of vain notions, but of quickening and comforting knowledge of God) as greatly encourageth them still on to seek for more. It is very pleasant here to increase in holy knowledge, though it usually bring an increase of malignant opposition, and so of sorrows to the flesh. The pleasure that the mind hath in common knowledge, brings men through a great deal of labor to attain it. How many years' travel over land and sea do some men take, to see and know more of this lower world, though it is little that they bring home, but more acquaintance with sin, and vanity, and vexation! How many more years do thousands spend in the reading multitudes of tedious volumes, that they may know what others knew before them! Printers and booksellers live by our desire of knowledge. What soul, then, on earth, can possibly conceive how great a pleasure it will be for a glorified soul to see the Lord! Though I cannot now conceive what that intuition of God himself will be, and whether it will not be a glorious kind of concluding or abstractive knowledge; whether the glory which we shall see be only a created appearance of God, or be his very essence, it satisfieth me that it will be as perfect a knowledge as is fit for me to desire; and I shall then desire no more than is fit; and what it is I shall then know by itself, for it is not otherwise to be clearly known. And all the pleasure that I shall have in heaven, in knowing any of the works of God, will be in my beholding God himself, his being, his vital power and action, his wisdom, and his love and goodness, in those works; for he is the life and glory of them all. "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God."

2. And, doubtless, it will be no small part of my delight to see and know God's perfect works; I mean the universe itself. I cannot say that I shall have so large a capacity as to comprehend all the world, or know it perfectly, and with an adequate knowledge; but I shall know it in such perfection as is suitable to my capacity. It is exceeding pleasant to know the least particles of the works of God. With what diligence and delight have men endeavored to anatomize a body, yea, a small part of a carcass, and to know and describe poor worms and insects, plants and minerals! and no man ever yet perfectly knew the least of them all. No herbalist or physician ever yet knew the nature and uses of any one herb with an adequate knowledge. With what delight and diligence are physical searches carried on in the world, though still we are all but groping in the dark, and ignorant of many things for one that

we know, and, therefore, know no one perfectly, because we are ignorant of the rest! But if, indeed, we were above our dreaming, erroneous hypothesis, and saw the nature of every creature, even in sea and land—this little spot of God's creation, and the compages of all—O, what a delightful spectacle would it be! How much more to see the whole creation, yea, or one vortex or system of the globes, and to know their union and communion, and to behold their beauteous symmetry, and hear them, in concord and melodious harmony, praising the glory of their great, wise, amiable Creator! This were a delectable sight indeed. I shall have as much of this as I shall be capable of; and the wonders and glories of the works of God shall wrap up my soul in admiring, joyful praise forever: and though here it be but little of God's work that we know, I have great reason to think that it will be far otherwise there. (1.) Because the state of perfection must far excel our dark and infant state of imperfection. We have now desires after such a knowledge. His works are great, sought out of them that have pleasure therein; and these desires, being of God, shall not be frustrate. (2.) Because there will be a proportionableness of the parts of our perfection; and therefore, as our love to God and his works will be there perfected, so will be our knowledge. (3.) Because we shall know God himself as much as we are capable, and therefore we shall know his works in him, or by a subordinate knowledge, the less being in the greater. (4.) Because God hath made his works to be known to his glory; but it is little that is here known of them by mortals; therefore they are known by them in heaven, who are fitted to improve that knowledge to his praise.

If Christ, who is the wisdom of God, will teach me the true philosophy, how to love God, and live here in all well-pleasing unto him, I shall quickly, in heaven, be a perfect philosopher; and experience will tell me that the surest way to be truly learned, and know the wonderful works of God, was to know, love and serve the great Creator; and in him we shall have all, and without him we know nothing, and have nothing at all.

Satan tempted Christ, by showing him the "kingdoms and glory of the world," and promising them all to him if he would have worshiped him: but God will show me more than Satan could show, and give me more of that which is best than Satan could give.

3. And that in heaven I shall better know Jesus Christ, and all the mystery of our redemption by him, will not be the least of my felicity; for in him are hid all the treasures of wisdom: and to know the mystery of his eternal Godhead, in the second person, and his created nature, and the union of these, and to see God's

wonderful design and work of grace in him laid open to our clearest view, O, what beautifying knowledge would this be! All dark texts concerning his person, his office, and his works, will then be expounded and fully understood. All those strange and difficult things which were the great exercise and honor of faith, will then be plain. Difficulties will no more be Satan's advantage to tempt us to unbelief, or doubting. The sight of the glory of my Lord will be my glory; John xvii. 24. If Paul had not then attained to perfection in the knowledge of Christ, and the power of his resurrection, but was pressing forward to reach that crown in the life to come, which he calleth "the resurrection of the dead," (Phil. iii. 9—12.) such as I must not expect here to attain it; but when that which is perfect is come, this imperfect knowledge of faith will be done away, as childish knowledge is in manhood: and the glass and riddle shall be laid aside, when we "shall see face to face, and shall know as we are known," (1 Cor. xiii. 10—12.) as to our sight and knowledge of Christ and his triumphant body; for I dare not apply that phrase to the sight and knowledge of the divine essence, nor yet deny it.

If, now, though we see not Christ, yet, believing, we love him, and rejoice in him with unspeakable, glorying joy; what love and joy will the everlasting sight of our blessed Head excite there in the souls of all the glorified!

4. I shall better, O, much better, know the heavenly Jerusalem, the triumphant church, the blessed angels, and glorified saints; and as my love to them, so my knowledge of them, will not be the least part of my heavenly delight. As strangely as I now look upward to that world, because I cannot see it with these eyes, it shall be my well-known everlasting habitation. O, what a sight, what a joyful sight, will death show me by drawing aside the veil, or rather the Lord of life, by turning death to my advantage! When I am there at home, I shall no more think with confusion, fear, or doubting, of that blessed place or state. My fears, which now come from the smallness of my faith, will end when faith is turned into vision. As I know the several rooms in my house, and houses in the street, and streets in the city, so shall I then know the many mansions which Christ hath said are in his Father's house. Words now give me so poor, imperfect a conception of the world and things which I never saw, as that sometimes I can scarcely tell whether the joy of my faith, or the trouble of my dark apprehensions, be the greater. But when I shall see the place and persons, the glory which I heard of, that will be the delightful satisfying and possessing kind of knowledge. If Nehemiah, and the godly Jews, made so great a matter of seeing the walls of Jerusalem repaired; and others, of the imperfect reedifying of the temple,

O, what a joyful sight to me will the heavenly Jerusalem then be! The most glorious sight will be at the great marriage-day of the Lamb, when Christ shall come to be glorified in his saints, and admired in all them that now believe; but the next to that will be the day of my particular deliverance, when I shall come to Christ, and see the saints admiring him in glory.

If I were of the opinion of those Greek fathers, who thought that stars were angels, or had intellectual souls, (matters unknown to us,) I should love them as my guardians, and take it to be yet more of my concernment to be advanced to the fuller knowledge of them. But seeing I know that angels love us, and by office do attend and keep us, and rejoice at our good, and at our repentance, and, which is far more, are more holy and excellent creatures than we are, it is, therefore, my comfort to think that I shall better know them, and live in near and perpetual acquaintance and communion with them, a more sensible and sweet communion than we can have with them here. Devils are ærial, and near to this dark and sinful world, and oftener appear to men than angels. But the angels affect not such descending appearances, till love and obedience to their Lord make it pleasing to them; and therefore we have but little knowledge, even of those that know, and love, and keep us. But when we come home to their nearest society and converse, to know them will be sweet and joyful knowledge; for they are more excellent creatures than the most glorious that are below the intellectual nature. They are full of light, and full of love to God and man. Had God bid me pray to them, I would not have refused it, but taken it for my honor; but seeing he hath not, I will do that which he bid me, even love them, and rejoice in my relation to the innumerable company of them, in the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, (Heb. xii. 22.) and long to know and love them more; expecting, ere long, to bear my part in the praises of God and of the Lamb, in the same choir where they are the precentors.

And that I shall know the spirits of the perfected just, and be of their communion, will be no small addition to my joy. How sweet hath one wise and holy, though weak and blemished, companion been to me here on earth! And how lovely have God's graces in such, though sullied, appeared to me! O, then, what a sight will it be when we shall see the millions of souls that shine in perfect wisdom and holiness with Christ! To see a garden that hath some beautiful flowers in it, is something; but if you saw whole fields and countries shining with them, it would be a glory, though fading, to the earth. A well-built city is a pleasanter sight than a single house, and a navy than a ship, and an army than one man. And if this poor, low world did all consist of wise, and just,

and holy persons, O, what an orderly, lovely world would it be! If one kingdom consisted (prince, magistrates, pastors, and people) all of such, what a blessed kingdom would that be! The plague of wicked men's deceits, and falsehoods, oppressions, and iniquities, may help to make us sensible of this. It would be a great temptation to us to be loath to die, and leave such a country, were it not that the more the beauty of goodness appeareth, the more the state of perfection is desired. It is pleasant to me to pray in hope, as Christ hath commanded me, that earth may be made liker unto heaven, which now is become so like to hell. But when I shall see the society perfected in number, in holiness, in glory, in heavenly employment, the joyful praises of Jehovah, the glory of God, and the Lamb shining on them, and God rejoicing over them as his delight, and myself partaking of the same, that will be the truly blessed day. And why doth my soul, imprisoned in flesh, no more desire it?

5. I shall better understand all the word of God, the matter, and the method of it: though I shall not have that use for it as I have now in this life of faith, yet I shall see more of God's wisdom and his goodness, his love, mercy, and justice, appearing in it, than ever man on earth could do. As the creatures, so the Scriptures, are perfectly known only by the perfect spirits. I shall then know how to solve all doubts, and reconcile all seeming contradictions, and to expound the hardest prophecies: that light will show me the admirable methods of those sacred words, where dark minds now suspect confusion! How evident and clear then will every thing appear to me! Like a small print when the light comes in, which I could not read in the glimmering twilight. How easily shall I then confute the cavils of all our present unbelievers! and how joyfully shall I praise that God and Savior that gave his church so clear a light to guide them through this darksome world, and so sure a promise to support them till they came to life eternal! How joyfully shall I bless him that by that immortal seed did regenerate me to the hopes of glory, and that ruled me by so holy and just a law!

6. In that world of light I shall better understand God's present and past works of providence, by which he ordereth the matters of this world: the wisdom and goodness of them is little understood in little parcels: it is the union and harmony of all the parts which sheweth the beauty of them, when the single parcels seem deformed, or are not understood. And no one can see the whole together but God, and they that see it in the light of his celestial glory: it is a prospect of that end, by which we have here any true understanding of such parcels as we see. Then I shall know clearly why, or to what use, God prospered the wicked, and tried the

righteous by so many afflictions : I shall know why he set up the ungodly, and put the humble under their feet ; why he permitted so much ignorance, ungodliness, pride, lust, oppression, persecution, falsehood, deceit, and other sins in the world : I shall know why the faithful are so few ; and why so many kingdoms of the world are left in heathenism, Mahometanism, and infidelity. The strange permissions which now so puzzle me, and are the matter of my astonishment, shall all be then as clear as day : I shall know why God disposed of me as he did through all my life ; and why I suffered what I did ; and how many great deliverances I had, which I understood not here, and how they were accomplished. All our misinterpretations of God's works and permissions will be then rectified ; and all our controversies about them, which Satan hath made so great advantage of, (by a pretended zeal for some truths of God,) will then be reconciled, and at an end ; and all the works of Divine Providence, from the beginning of the world, will then appear a most delectable, beauteous frame.

7. And among all these works, I shall especially know more the nature and excellency of God's mercies and gifts of love, which here we too unthankfully undervalued and made light of. The special works of love should be the matter of our most constant, sweet, and serious thoughts, and the fuel of our constant love and gratitude : the lively sense of love and mercy maketh lively Christians, abounding in love to God, and mercy to others ; but the enemy of God and man most laboreth to obscure, diminish, and disgrace God's love and mercies to us, or to make us disrelish them, that they may be unfruitful, as to their excellent ends and uses. Little do most Christians know how much they wrong God and themselves, and how much they lose by the diminutive, poor thoughts which they have of God's mercies : ingratitude is a grievous misery to the sinner, as gratitude is a very pleasant work. Many a thousand mercies we now receive, which we greatly undervalue. But when I come to the state and work of perfect gratitude, I shall have a more perfect knowledge of all the mercies which ever I received in my life, and which my neighbors, and friends, and God's church, and the world, did ever receive ; for though the things be past, the use of it is not past. Mercies remembered must be the matter of our everlasting thanks ; and we cannot be perfectly thankful for them without a perfect knowledge of them. The worth of a Christ and all his grace ; the worth of the gospel ; the worth of our church privileges, and all God's ordinances ; the worth of our books and friends, and helps of our life and health, and all conveniences, will be better understood in heaven than the most holy and thankful Christian here understandeth them.

8. And it will be some addition to my future happiness, that I

shall then be much better acquainted with myself; both with my nature, and with my sin and grace. I shall then better know the nature of a soul, and its formal faculties, (three in one :) I shall know the nature and way of its operations, and how far its acts are simple, or compound, or organical. I shall know how far memory, fancy, and sense, internal and external, belong to the rational soul, and whether the sensitive and rational are two or one; and what senses will perish, and what not. I shall know how the soul doth act upon itself, and what acts it hath that are not felt in sleep, in apoplexies, and in the womb.*

* * * * *

I shall know how far the soul is receptive, and what the *causa finalis* doth to it; and what each object is to the constitution or production of the act; yea, and what an act is, and what a habit; and how a soul, acting or habited, differeth from itself not acting or habited; and how its acts are many, and yet but one; or its faculties at least. Many other such difficulties will all be solved, which now philosophers contend about in the dark, and pass but under doubtful conjectures; or, at least, are known to very few.

And I shall know how God's Spirit operateth on souls; and how it is sent from Christ's human nature to work on man; and whether grace be properly, or only metaphorically, called a nature (a new nature, a divine nature) in us. I shall know what free-will is, and how man's will can be the first determiner of any act of its own in *specie morali* (good or evil) without being such a *causa prima*, as none but God can be; and so how far free acts are necessitated or not. I shall know what power the intellect hath on the will, and the will on the intellect; and what power the sense and fancy hath on either; and what any *intellectus agens* doth; whether it be to our intellection as the sun is to our sight. I shall know what is meant by the degrees of acts and habits in the soul; and whether there be divers degrees of substantiality, or of the *virtus vel facultas formalis* of several souls. I shall know better the difference of habits called acquired and infused; and what common grace is, and what it doth; and what nature can do of itself, or by common grace, without that which is proper to the justified; and how far any degrees of grace are lost.

I shall know what measure of grace I had myself; and how far I was mistaken in myself; and what acts were sincere; and how

* A large page of philosophical difficulties, growing out of the inquiries of "Science falsely so called," is here omitted. What is retained is a sufficient specimen.—Ed.

much that was not sound was mixed ; and what was of myself and sin.

I shall know much more of my sins than here I ever knew, the number and the greatness of them ; that so I may know, with greatest thankfulness and love, how much I am beholden to pardoning and healing grace.

Yea, I shall know more of my body, as it was the habitation of my soul, or the organical matter on which unitedly it worked. I shall know how far it helped or hindered me ; and what were all those obscure diseases, that puzzled all the physicians and myself ; and how marvelously God sustained, preserved, and oft delivered me ; and what of my actions was to be imputed to the body, and what of them to the soul.

9. And every fellow-creature, which I am concerned to know, I shall know far better than now I do, both things and persons : the good and bad, the sincere and the hypocrites, will be there discerned ; and many an action that here went for honorable, covered or colored with wit or worldly advantages, or false pretenses, will then be found to be odious and unjust ; and wickedness will be flattered or extenuated no more ; and many a good and holy work which false men, through wickedness and worldly interest, reproached as some odious crime, will there be justified, honored, and rewarded. All sciences are there perfect, without our ambiguous terms, or imperfect axioms, and rules of art.

10. And lastly, I shall better know from what enemies, what sins, what dangers, I was here delivered ; what contrivances, and malicious endeavors of Satan and his instruments God defeated ; how many snares I escaped : and I shall better know how great my deliverance is by Christ from the wrath to come. Though we shall not know hell by painful sense, we shall know it so far as is necessary to fill us with gratitude to our Redeemer : yea, we shall know much of it far better than the damned spirits that feel it ; for we shall know, by sweet and full fruition, what the joy and blessedness is which they have lost ; when they have no such kind of knowledge.

All this knowledge will be thus advanced to my glorified soul beyond what I can here conceive in flesh : and is it not then far better to be with Christ ?

IV. The Constitutive Reasons from the State of my Will.

But it is the will that is to the soul what the heart is to the body : as it is the prime seat of morality, so is it the chief seat of felicity. My greatest evil is there ; and my greatest subjective

good will be there. Satan did most against it, and God will do most for it. And will it not be better to be with Christ than here?

1. It will not there be tied to a body of cross interests and inclinations, which is now the greatest snare and enemy to my soul; which is still drawing my love, and care, and fears, and sorrows, to and for itself, and turning them from my highest interest. How great a deliverance will it be to be freed from the temptations, and the inordinate love, and cares, and fears, for this corruptible flesh!

2. My will shall not there be tempted by a world of inferior good, which is the bait and provision for the flesh, where meat, and sleep, and possessions, house, lands, and friends, are all become my snares and danger. God's mercies will not be made there the tempter's instruments. I shall not there have the flatteries or frowns, promises or threatenings, of the tyrants of the world to tempt me: bad company will not infect me, nor divert me: the errors of good men will not seduce me; nor reputation or reverence of the wise, learned, or religious, draw me to imitate them in any sin.

3. I shall there have none of Satan's solicitations to pervert my will: he will not have that advantage by my sense and fancy, nor that access unto me, as now he hath. But of this I spake before.

My will shall there be better than here, i. Negatively, because, (1.) There will be nothing that is displeasing to God; no sinful inclination, habit, or act; nothing to strive against God's Spirit; nor grudge at any word or work of God; no principles of enmity or rebellion left. (2.) There will be nothing that is against the good of others; no inclinations to injury, or any thing that is against my neighbor's or the common good. (3.) There will be nothing in it that is cross to itself; no more war or striving in me; not a law in my mind, and a law in my members, that are contrary to each other; no crossness between sense and reason, nor between the sensitive appetite and the rational: all will be at unity and peace within.

ii. Positively, Christ will have finished his cure on my will. The work of sanctification will be perfect. My will shall there, by union and communion, be made conformable to the will of Christ, and so unto the Father's will. This must needs be meant (whatever more) in the prayer of Christ, where he prayeth, "That they may be one, as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they may be one in us, that they may be one, even as we are one." John xvii. 21, 22. The will of Christ and of the Father will be my will; that is, I shall love and will (dispositively and actually) the same that God loveth and willet, (in the measure of a creature infinitely below him.) And if so, 1. How can the will of

man have greater honor than to be the same with the will of God? Assimilation to a king, among us poor mortals, goeth for honor; assimilation to angels is much more. That we shall be like, or equal to, angels, is a high part of the blessed's praise; but how much more is it to be thus far like to God! Indeed, God's image, and the divine nature in us here, can be no less than this similitude to God's will in the degree that we have it. But, alas! that degree is so very low, as that we can hardly tell whether our similitude or dissimilitude be the more; I mean, whether our wills are for more that God willeth, or against more. O, how many thousand wishes and desires have we had, which are against the will of God! But there we shall have the full impression of God's will upon our wills, as face answereth face in a glass, or as the wax answereth the seal; as the finger on the outside answereth to the motion of the clock within, so, in all things which belong to our duty and perfection, we shall answer the will of God. As the echo answereth the voice, defectively, but truly, without contradiction or discord, so will our wills be as the echo of God's will.

2. And then I am sure that there will be nothing in my will but good; for God willeth no evil.

3. And this will be virtually all obedience; for all sin is voluntary, and all moral good is primarily in the will.

4. And then there will be no matter of disquiet in me, but all will be in perfect peace; for all that is like God will be pleasing both to God and me; no troubling crossness will remain.

5. And how easy and sweet, then, will all my obedience be, when I shall perfectly will it, without any reluctancy or averseness! All will be my very pleasure that I do.

And seeing my will shall be the same with the will of God, it followeth that it shall never be frustrate, but I shall have all whatsoever I would have, and shall be and do whatsoever I would be and do. For I shall desire nothing but what God willeth, and God's will shall certainly be done. I shall have as much love and joy as I would have; I shall be as happy as I would be; I shall desire nothing for others but it shall be done. Indeed, if God's will were there unknown to me, I might ignorantly go against it, as I do here; but there, before I will or desire any thing, I shall know whether it be God's will or not, so that I shall never wish any thing which shall not be accomplished. And as it is God's perfection to have his will always done, (though all his laws be not obeyed,) so my perfection shall consist in this likeness unto God, that my will shall be still fulfilled. And then Christ's promises will be perfectly performed—"Whatsoever ye ask the Father in my name, he will give it you. Ye shall ask what you will, and it shall be done unto you;" John xv. 16, and xvi. 23. and xiv. 13, 14. and xv. 7. While their will was

the same with the will of Christ : but he saith not that it shall all be given us here. We ask for perfection, and we shall have it, but not here.

iii. Yea, my will itself shall be my fruition, for it shall not be the will of one in need ; a desire of what I want, for I shall want nothing ; therefore it is said that we shall thirst no more : but it will be a complacency in what I do possess, and in this also my perfection will be the image of God's perfection ; not but that all creatures still receive from God, and in that sense may be said to need, in that they have nothing of themselves, but all by gift and communication from him ; but being still and full possessors, they cannot properly be said to want. Complacency in that which we possess is love and pleasure in one act ; and, indeed, pleasure and love are the same thing. To love any thing, is to have that thing to be pleasing to my mind. Even when it is wanted, it is thought on as a pleasing thing, and therefore desired, so that the desiring act of the will is but a second act occasioned by want, and following the first act, which is complacency, or simple love. I desire it because I love it. Rightly, therefore, is the will itself called love, for, in the first act, love, will, and rational appetite, are all words of the same signification. My will, therefore, must needs be perpetually full of perfect joy, when enjoying love and pleasure will be my will itself. Thus shall I have in me the spring of living waters, and the Comforter will then perfectly do his work, when my constant will itself shall be comfort. Well, therefore, is glory said to be the perfection of sanctifying grace, when this grace is the beginning of that love and joy which glory is the perfection of ; and perfection is the Spirit's work.

iv. And it will be much of my felicity that my will shall be confirmed and fixed in this conformity to the will of God, and holy love will be its nature. Now, both understanding and will are so lamentably mutable, that, further than God promiseth to uphold us, we know not one day what we shall think, judge, or will the next. But when love is as a fixed nature in us, we shall be still the same, adhering to amiable goodness, without intermission or cessation. It will be as easy to us (and more) to love God and holiness, as it is to the hungry and thirsty to love meat and drink, or to the proud to love praise or domination, yea, or to any man to love his life. And we shall be no more weary of loving, than the sun is of shining, or than the hungry is of feasting, or a friend of friendly love and converse. Nay, the comparison is quite too low, for all creatures here have a fading vanity which wearieth the satiated or failing appetite ; but there is no such thing in heaven.

And as from the nature of that act, so much more from the nature of the object, my love will appear to be my happiness. The objects (which are the matter of the act) will be these :—

i. God himself will be the full and everlasting object of my love. And he that could but understand, as well as those in heaven do, what this word signifieth, 'to love God, and be beloved of him,' would say, that there needs no other description of perfect happiness: perfect, joyful complacency in God is the heaven which I desire and hope for. This is my felicity, and much more. As I am the agent of love to God, and the object of God's love to me, it is my felicity. As God is the ultimate object of my love, and the agent of his love to me, (that is, of the effects of it,) so it is unspeakably more high and excellent than to be my felicity. Love is the closure of the wills of God and man, and as it is God's part or interest, (efficiently or objectively,) it is infinitely more excellent than as it is my part and interest.

In God there is all that love can desire for its full, everlasting faith. 1. He is infinitely good in himself, that is, most amiable; and the nature of man's will is to love good as good. Could we love God with a love that is adequate to the object, we should be God ourselves, which is impossible: none but God can adequately know God or love him. In God's love to himself, both the act and object are infinite, and, indeed, are both one, there being not that formally which we know by the name of act and object; but 'act and object' are our analogical, inadequate conceptions of that act of God which is his essence. But in our love to God the act is finite, and infinitely below the object; yea, the object, which in reality is itself infinite, yet proximately as the *esse cognitum* is the object of our love, is finite there. It is the conception or idea of God in the intellect, which is the proper and nearest object of the will; and this is as a face in a glass, a shadow, even the finite little shadow of an infinite Being. The same infinite good is a felicity to divers persons in divers degrees, according as they diversely love him, and are receptive of his love.

2. God, who is infinitely good in himself, will be that most suitable good to me, and meetest for the dearest embracements of my will. For, He hath all in himself that I need or can desire. There is no room, nothing above him, or beyond him, or without him, for love to cleave to. Though below him the creature, though not being without him, is loved without him, by the deception of the mind.

He is willing to be loved by me. He disdaineth not my love. He might have refused to be embraced by such affections as have so oft and sinfully polluted themselves by embracing vanity and filth. As persons of state, and stately cleanliness, will not be touched by filthy hands, much less let dogs or dirty swine leap on them, which come from wallowing in the mire; God might have driven me away from the happiness of loving him, and have denied

me the leave for so high a work ; but he commandeth my love, and maketh it my greatest duty. He inviteth and entreateth me, as if he were a gainer by my happiness. He seeketh to me to seek to him ; and as he is the first, so is he the most earnest suitor. He is far readier to receive my love than I am to give it him. All the compassionate invitations which I have had from him here, by his word and mercies, assure me that he will there receive me readily : he that so valued my poor, cold, imperfect love to him on earth, will not reject my perfect love in heaven. He that made it the great work of his Spirit to effect it, will not refuse it when it is made perfect by himself.

And he is near to me, and not a distant God, out of my reach, and so unsuitable to my love. Blind unbelievers may dream that he is far off ; but he is as near us, even now, as we are to ourselves. He is not far from any of us, for in him we live, and move, and have our being. The light of the sun is not so near my eyes, as God will be forever to my mind. When he would sanctify us to love him, he bringeth us nigh to him in Christ. As we love ourselves easily, as being, as they say, the nearest to ourselves, so we shall as easily love God as ourselves, when we see that he is as near us as we are to ourselves, as well as that he is infinitely more amiable in himself.

And because of the imparity of the creature and the Creator, he hath provided such means to demonstrate to us his nearness, as are necessary to the exercise of our love. We shall see his glory, and taste his love, in our glorified Mediator, and in the glory of the church and world. God will condescend to show himself to us according to our capacities of beholding him. Here we see him in his works and word, and there we shall see him in the glory of all his perfect works. But this leadeth me to the second object of my love.

ii. Under God, as I shall see, so I shall delightfully love, the glorious perfection of the universe, even the image of God in all the world ; as my love will be my delight, so I shall love best that which is best, and most delight in it : and the whole is better than any part ; and there is a peculiar beauty and excellency in the whole world, as perfect, compaginate, harmonious, which is not to be found in any part, no, not in Christ himself, as man, nor in his church.

The marvelous inclination that all things have to union, even the inanimates, might persuade me, if I felt it not certainly in myself, that it is most credible that man also shall have the like inclination, and such as is agreeable to the nature of his faculties ; and therefore our love and delight in all things is that uniting inclination in man.

iii. And I shall have a special love to the holy society, the triumphant, universal church, consisting of Christ, angels, and saints, as they are specially amiable in the image and glory of God. God himself loveth them more than his inferior works; that is, his essence, which is love, and hath no degrees or change, doth send forth fuller streams of good upon them, or maketh them better and happier than the rest. And my love will imitate the love of God, in my capacity. And if societies on earth, more holy and wise than others, though imperfectly, are very amiable, what then will the heavenly society be? Of this I spake before, (of knowing them.)

1. Think here, O my soul, how sweet a state unto thee it will be to love the Lord Jesus, thy glorified Head, with perfect love! When the glory of God, which shineth in him, will feast thy love with full and everlasting pleasure, the highest created perfection of power, wisdom, and goodness, refulgent in him, will not give leave to thy love to cease, or intermit, or abate its fervor. When thou shalt see in the glorified church the precious fruits of Christ's redemption, grace, and love, this also will feed thy love to him, from whom this heavenly glory cometh. And when thou shalt feel thyself possessed of perfect happiness, by his love to thee, will not this also do its part? Yea, the remembrance of all his former love, what he did for thee, and what he did in thee here on earth; how he called thee with an holy calling; how he washed thee in his blood from all thy sins; how he kindled in thee those desires which tended to that perfect glory; how he renewed thy nature; how he instructed, and guided, and preserved thee from thy childhood; and how many and how great sins, enemies, dangers and sufferings, he saved thee from;—all this will constrain thee everlastingly to love him. Thus, (though he give the kingdom to the Father, as ceasing his mediatory, healing, saving work of acquisition,) he will be to thee the Mediator of fruition. God in him will be accessible, and condescend to a suitable communion with us; John xvii. 24. And as Christ is thy life, radically and efficiently, as he is the Giver of grace and Spirit of love, so he will be objectively thy life as he is lovely, and it will be formally thy life to love him, and God in him, forever.

2. Think, also, O my soul, how delectable it will be to love (as well as to know) those angels that most fervently love the Lord! They will be lovely to thee as they have loved thee, and more as they have been lovers and benefactors to the church and to mankind; but far more as they are so many refulgent stars, which continually move and shine, and burn in purest love to their Creator. O, blessed difference between that amiable society of holy spirits, and this dark, mad, distracted, wicked world! Here

devils tempt me within, and devils incarnate persecute me without. Blaspheming of God, reviling godliness, deriding the Sacred Scriptures, and sacred exercises, malignant slandering of the servants of God, hating, persecuting, silencing, and saying all manner of evil falsely of them, for their righteousness' sake, while such crimes are pretended, as they once falsely charged on Christ himself. This is the conversation of those that I have long dwelt with in the world: atheism, infidelity, papal church tyranny, bloody wars, destroying the righteous, oppressing the poor, adultery and fornication, stigmatizing perjury, ambition, violence, covetousness, deceit, sottish ignorance, willfulness in sin, hatred of reproof, revengeful malice;—these, and such like, are the fruits of the soil where I have long sojourned, (though, through the grace of Christ, among the faithful, there have been better fruits.) And is not the company of holy angels better than this? With whom God is all; who are even made up of shining wisdom, and holy love, and beneficent activity; who are the blessed choir that melodiously sing forth the high praises of their Maker. Among whom God dwelleth as in his presence-chamber, or his temple, and in whom he taketh his great delight. With these I shall see or hear no evil. No mixture of fools or wicked ones do pollute or trouble their society. There will be no false doctrine, no evil example, no favoring wickedness, no accusing goodness, no hurtful violence; but holy, powerful, operative love, will be all, and do all, as their very nature, life, and work. And is it not better to be a door-keeper there, than to dwell in the palaces of wickedness? And is not a day with them better than a thousand here?

3. And with the holy angels I shall love holy souls that are made like unto them, and joined with them in the same society; and it is likely with them judge, that is, rule the world. All their infirmities are there put off with the flesh; they also are spirits made up of holy life, and light, and love. There is none of their former ignorance, error, imprudence, selfishness, contentiousness, impatience, or any other troubling, hurtful thing. When I think with what fervent love to God, to Jesus Christ, and to one another, they will be perfectly united there, alas! how sad and how shameful is it, that they should here be prone to disaffections and divisions, and hardly agree to call each other the servants of God, or to worship God in the same assemblies! but the remnants of dividing principles, *viz.* pride, error, and uncharitableness, will be all left behind. Society with imperfect saints is sweet; the imperfect image of God upon them is amiable; but their frailties here are so vexatious, that it is hard to live with some of them in peace. But perfect love will make them one; and O, how delightful will that communion of saints be! I can never forget how sweet God

bath made the course of my pilgrimage, by the fragrant and usefulness of his servants' graves. How sweet were my bosom friends been, though mutable! How sweet hath the neighborhood of the godly been! How sweet have the holy assemblies been; and how many hours of comfort have I there had! How profitable have their writings, their conference, and their prayers been! What then will it be, to live in the union of perfect love with perfect saints in heaven forever, and with them concordantly to love the God of love!

And as the act and object of love will constitute my felicity, so will my reception from the love of God and his creatures be sweeter to me than my own activity can be; for it is mutual love that makes it up. I shall not be the fountain of my own delights; nor can I act till I am acted, nor offer any thing to God, but what I have first received from him. And receive I shall, abundantly and continually, and from thence shall overflow to God; and receiving and returning are now, and will be, the circular, endless motion, and our true perpetual life and happiness.

All my receivings shall be from God. His love is not a mere immanent will, nor a wish which toucheth not the object; but it is what heat is in, or from, the sun or fire: it is an efflux of goodness: it is the most powerful, sweet, communicating principle, or work. All love is communicative; but none in comparison of God's; as there is none primitively and simply good but God. How much doth love in the affairs of men! All that is pleasant in the world is it, or its effects. * * Were it not for natural love, mothers would never endure the pain, and trouble, and care, which is necessary to human birth and education; were it not for love, parents would never labor all their lives to leave their children well instructed, and well provided for, when they are gone. My food would not please me did I not love it, and I should neglect it to the neglect of my life. Did I not love my books, and learning itself, I should never have bestowed so much of seventy years in poring on them and searching for knowledge as I have done; did I not love my house, my conveniences and necessities, I should neglect them, and they would be to me of small use; did I not love my friends, I should be less profitable to them, and they to me; did I not love my life, I should neglect it, and never have endured the labor and cost about it as I have done. If a man love not his country, posterity, and the common good, he will be as a burdensome drone in the hive, or as pernicious vermin. What is done in the world that is good, but by love?

And if created love be so necessary, so active, so communicative, how much more will the infinite love of the Creator be! His love is now the life of the world; his love is the life of nature in

the living, the life of holiness in saints, and the life of glory in the blessed. In this infinite love it is that I, and all the saints, shall dwell for evermore. And if I dwell in love, and love in me, surely I shall have its sweet and plenteous communication, and shall ever drink of the rivers of pleasure. It is pleasant to nature to be beloved of others, especially of the great, and wise, and good; much more to have all the communications of love, in converse and gifts, in plenty and continuance, which may be still expressing it to our greatest benefit! Had I a friend now, that did for me but the hundredth part of what God doth, how dearly should I love him! Think, then, think believingly, seriously, constantly, O my soul, what a life thou shalt live forever in the presence, the face, the bosom of infinite, eternal love. He now shineth on me by the sun, and on my soul by the sun of righteousness; but it is as through a lantern, or the crevices of my darksome habitation; but then he will shine on me, and in me, openly, and with the fullest streams and beams of love.

God is the same God in heaven and earth, but I shall not be the same man. Here I receive comparatively little, but live in darkness, doubtful and frequent sorrows, because my receptivity is less; the windows of my soul are not open to his light; sin hath raised clouds, and consequently storms, against my comforts; the entrances to my soul by the straits of flesh and sense are narrow; and they are made narrower by sin than they were by nature. Alas, how often would love have spoken comfortably to me, and I was not at home to be spoken with, but was abroad among a world of vanities, or was not at leisure, or was asleep, and not willing to be awaked! How oft would love have come in and dwelt with me, and I have unkindly shut my doors against him! How oft would he have been with me in secret, where he freely would embrace me, but I had some pleasing company or business which I was loath to leave! How oft would he have feasted me, and had made all ready, but I was taken up and could not come! Nay, when his table hath been spread before me, Christ, grace, and glory, have been offered to me, my appetite hath been gone, or dull, and all hath been almost neglected by me, and hath scarce seemed pleasant enough to be accepted, or to call off my mind from luscious poison. How oft would he have shined upon me, and I have shut my windows or mine eyes! He was jealous indeed, and liked not a partner: he would have been all to me, if I would have been all for him. But I divided my heart, my thoughts, my love, my desires, and my kindnesses; and, alas, how much did go besides him, yea, against him, to his enemies, even when I knew that all was lost, and worse than lost, which was not his! What wonder, then, if so foolish and unkind a sinner had little pleasure

in his love; and if so great ingratitude and neglect of sovereign goodness were punished with such strangeness, and fears, and saintings, as I have long with groans lamented! *Recipitur ad modum recipientis.*

But in heaven I shall have none of these obstructions; all old unkindness and ingratitude will be forgiven; the great Reconciler in whom I am beloved will then have perfected his work; I shall then be wholly separated from the vanity which here deceived me; my open soul will be prepared to receive the heavenly influx; with open face I shall behold the open face of glorifying love; I shall joyfully attend his voice, and delightfully relish the celestial provisions. No disease will corrupt my appetite; no sluggishness will make me guilty again of my old neglects; the love of the Father, by the grace of the Son, and the communion of the Holy Spirit, will have got the victory over all my deadness, folly, and disaffection, and my God-displeasing and self-undoing averseness and enmity will be gone forever. The perfect love, which God doth first effect in me, will be my everlasting receptivity of the fullest love of God. Benevolent love will make me good; that is, a holy lover of God; and then pleased love will make me his delight, and benevolence will still maintain me in my capacity.

Study this heavenly work of love, O my soul; these are not dead or barren studies; these are not sad, unpleasant studies; it is only love, that can relish love and understand it; the will here hath its gust so like to an understanding, as make some philosophers say, *voluntas percipit* is a proper phrase. What can poor, carnal worldlings know of glorious love, who study it without love? What sounding brass and tinkling cymbals, a lifeless voice, are they that preach of God, and Christ, and heavenly glory, without love! But gazing upon the face of love in Christ, and tasting of its gifts, and looking up to its glorious reign, is the way to kindle the sacred fire in thee. Look upwards, if thou wouldest see the light that must lead thee upwards. It is not for nothing that Christ hath taught us to begin our prayers with "Our Father, which art in heaven;" it is 'fatherly' love that must win our hearts, and that must comfort them; and it is in 'heaven' where this is gloriously manifested. As I said before, as the soul is in all the body, but yet understandeth not in the hand as it doth in the head, and rejoiceth not in the foot as it doth in the heart; so God, that is every where, doth not every where glorify his love as he doth it in heaven. Thither, therefore, the mind and eye are even by nature taught to look up as to God, as we look a man in the face when we speak to him, rather than to his feet, though his soul be also there.

My sinful heart hath needed sorrow. My careless, rash, presumptuous soul hath needed fears; and I have had some part of

these. Mercy saw it good for me, as necessary to prevent my dangerous deceits and lapses; and O, that in the hour of sensual temptations I had feared more, and departed from evil. But it is holy love that must be my life; or else I am dead, notwithstanding fear.

O, come, then, and study the life of love. It is more of a holy nature than of art; but yet study must do much to prepare thee to receive it. This is the great use of a heavenly conversation. It is the contemplation, belief, and hope of the glorious state of love hereafter, that must make us like it, and kindle it in us here. The burning-glass must be turned directly to the sun, if you will have it set any thing on fire. There is a carnal or common love to God, which is kindled in men by carnal pleasures; but a holy love, like that in heaven, must be studiously fetched from heaven, and kindled by the foresight of what is there, and what we shall be there forever. Faith must ascend and look within the veil. Thou must not live as a stranger to thy home, to thy God, and Savior, and thy hopes. The fire that must warm thee is in heaven, and thou must come near it, or open thyself to its influence, if thou wilt feel its powerful efficacy. It is night and winter with carnal minds, when it is day and summer with those that set their faces heavenward.

But, though all my receivings will be from God, they will not be from him alone. We must live in perfect union also with one another, and with all the heavenly society; and therefore as we must love them all, so shall we be beloved by them all; and this will be a subordinate part of our blessedness. God there will make use of second causes, even in communicating his love and glory.

1. The Lord Jesus Christ will not only be the object of our delightful love, but will also love us with an effectual, operative love forever. His love will be as the vital heat and motion of the heart to all the members, the root of our life and joy. The love of our Redeemer will flow out into us all as the vital spirits, and his face of glory will be the sun of the heavenly Jerusalem, and will shine upon us, and show us God; and in his light we shall have light. Did his tears for a dead Lazarus make men say, 'Behold how he loved him!' O, then, what will the reviving beams of heavenly life make us say of that love which filleth us with the pleasures of his presence, and turneth our souls into joy itself! He comforteth us now by the teaching of his word; but, surely, the fruition of salvation will be more gladdening than the tidings of it. When he that told us of glory, in his gospel, shall give it us, we shall not only believe but feel that he loveth us.

Believe, O my soul, thy Savior's love, that thou mayest foretaste

it, and be fit to feel it. We were incapable, in sinful flesh, of seeing him otherwise than as clothed with flesh, and his consolations were administered by a word of promise suitable to his appearance; but when he withdrew his bodily presence, the Comforter was sent with a fuller consolation. But all that was but the earnest, and the first fruits, of what he will be to us forever. Be not seldom, nor unbelieving, nor slight, in the thoughts of thy Savior's love; for it is he that is the way to the infinite love. Let thy believing be so much of thy daily work, that thou mayest say that he dwelleth in thy heart by faith; (Eph. iii. 17.) and that while thou livest here, it is Christ that liveth in thee; and that thy life in the flesh is not a fleshly life, but by the faith of the Son of God that hath loved thee, and given himself for thee; (Gal. ii. 20.) and that though thou see him not, yet, believing thou lovest him also with unspeakable joy, as believing the unspeakable perfect joy which his love will communicate to thee forever.

Look upon the sun, and think thus with thyself: How wonderful is the emanation of this sun; its motion, light, and heat, communicated to so many millions of creatures all over the earth, and in the seas! What if all these beams of light and heat were proportionable beams of perfect knowledge, love, and joy; and that all creatures that are under the sun had, from its influx, as much wisdom, love, and joy, as they have light, heat, and motion! Would not then this earth be as a world of angels, and a heaven? O, what a blessed world would it be; and what a benefactor would the sun be to the world! Why, even such will Jesus Christ be to the celestial world. He is the sun of glory. His influence will send forth life and light, and joyful love upon all the blessed, from the face of God, as the sun sends forth from God its motion, light, and heat upon this world. Now, therefore, begin, and live upon him: live upon the influence of his grace, his teaching, love-kindling, and quickening grace, that thou mayest have his name and mark, and he may find in thee something of himself, or of his own when thou comest to his righteous trial. His grace is not in my power, nor at my command. It is not meet it should be so; but he hath not bid me seek and beg in vain. If he had never told me that he will give it me, it is equal to a promise if he do but bid me seek and ask. But I have more. He teacheth me to pray: he maketh my prayers: he writeth me out a prayer book on my heart: he giveth me desires, and he loveth to be importuned by them: his Spirit is first a spirit of supplication, and after of consolation, and in both a spirit of adoption. So far is he from being loath to be troubled with my importunity, that he seeketh me to seek his grace, and is displeased with me that I will ask and have no more.

All this is true : but how then cometh my soul to be yet so low, so dark, so fond of this wretched flesh and world, and so backward to go home, and dwell with Christ? Alas! a taste of heaven on earth is a mercy too precious to be cast away upon such as have long grieved and quenched the Spirit, and are not, by diligent and patient seeking, prepared to receive it. He that proclaimeth a general peace, will give peace only to the sons of peace. If, after such unkind neglects, such willful sins as I have been guilty of, I should expect to be suddenly in my Savior's arms and to be feasted presently with the first-fruits of heaven, I should look that the Most Holy should too little manifest his hatred of my sin. My conscience remembereth the follies of my youth, and many a later odious sin; and telleth me that if heaven were quite hid from my sight, and I should never have a glimpse of the face of glorious, eternal love, it were but just. I look upward from day to day; I groan to see his pleased face, and better to know my God and my home. I cry to him daily, 'My God, this little is better than all the pleasures of sin. My hopes are better than all the possessions of this world. Thy gracious looks have oft revived me, and thy mercies have been immeasurable to my soul and body. But, O, how far short am I of what, even fifty years ago, I hoped sooner to have attained! Where is the peace that passeth understanding, that should keep my heart and mind in Christ? O, where is the seeing, the longing, the rejoicing, and triumphing faith? Where is that pleasant familiarity above, that should make a thought of Christ and heaven to be sweeter to me than the thoughts of friends, or health, or all the prosperity and pleasure of this world? Do those that dwell in God, and God in them, and have their hearts and conversations in heaven, attain to no more clear and satisfying perceptions of that blessed state than I have yet attained? Is there no more acquaintance above to be here expected; no livelier sense of future joys, nor sweeter foretaste; no fuller silencing of doubts and fears? I am not so loath to go to a friend, nor to the bed where I oft spend the night in restless pains and rolling, as I have too often been to come to thee. Alas! how many of thy servants are less afraid to go to a prison than to their God, and had rather be banished to a land of strangers than sent to heaven! Lord, must I, that am called thy child, and an heir of heaven, and a co-heir with Christ, have no more acquaintance with my glorified Lord, and no more love to thee, that art my portion, before I go hence, and come before thee? Shall I have no more of the heavenly life, and light, and love? Alas! I have scarce enough in my meditations to denominate them truly heavenly meditations. I have scarce enough in a prayer to make it indeed a heavenly prayer, or in a sermon to make it a heavenly sermon; and shall I have no

more when I come to die? Must I go hence so like a stranger to my home? Wilt thou take strangers into heaven, and know them as thine that do not better know thee here? O my God, vouchsafe a sinner yet more of his Spirit that came down on earth to call up earthly minds to God, and to open heaven to all believers! O what do I beg for so frequently, so earnestly, for the sake of my Redeemer, as the spirit of life and consolation, which may show me the pleased face of God, and unite all my affections to my glorified Head, and draw up this dark and drowsy soul to love and long to be with thee!'

But, alas! though these are my daily groans, how little yet do I ascend! I dare not blame the God of love; he is full and willing. I dare not blame my blessed Savior; he hath showed that he is not backward to do good. I dare not accuse the Holy Spirit; it is his work to sanctify and comfort souls. If I knew no reason of this, my low and dark estate, I must needs conclude that it is somewhat in myself. But, alas! my conscience wants not matter to satisfy me of the cause. Sinful resistance of the Spirit, and unthankful neglects of grace and glory, are undoubtedly the cause. But are they not a cause that mercy can forgive, that grace can overcome? And may I not yet hope for such a victory before I die?

Lord, I will lie at thy doors and groan: I will pour out my moans before thee. I will beg, and whatever thou wilt, do thou with me. Thou describest the kindness of the dogs to a Lazarus that lay at a rich man's door in sores: thou commendest the neighborly pity of a Samaritan, that took care of a wounded man: thou condemnest those that will not show mercy to the poor and needy: thou biddest us be merciful as our heavenly Father is merciful. If we see our brother have need, and shut up the bowels of our compassion from him, it is because thy love dwelleth not in us: and shall I wait, then, at thy doors in vain, and go empty away from such a God, when I beg but for that which thou hast commanded me to ask, and without which I cannot serve thee or come to thee, live or die in a habit becoming a member of Christ, a child of God, and an heir of heaven? O give me the wedding garment, without which I shall but dishonor thy bounteous feast. Let me wear a livery which becometh thy family, even a child of God. How oft hast thou commanded me to rejoice; yea, to rejoice with exceeding and unspeakable joy! and how fain would I in this obey thee! O that I had more faithfully obeyed thee in other preparatory duties, in ruling my senses, my fancy, my tongue, and in diligent using all thy talents! Then I might more easily have obeyed thee in this. Thou knowest, Lord, that love and joy are duties that must have more than a command. O bid me do them

with an effecting word. How can I rejoice in death and darkness? When the bridegroom is absent I must fast and mourn. While I look towards heaven but through the crevices of this dungeon flesh, my love and joy will be but answerable to my light. How long is it since I hoped that I had been translated from the kingdom of darkness, and delivered from the power of the prince of darkness, and brought into that light which is the entrance of the inheritance of saints! And yet, alas! darkness, darkness is still my misery. There is light round about me, in thy word and works, but darkness is within me; and if my eye be dark, the sun will be no sun to me. Alas! my Lord, it is not all the learning in the world; no, not of theology, that consisteth in the knowledge of words and methods, which I can take for the satisfactory, heavenly light. To know what thou hast written in the sacred book, is not enough to make me know my glorified Savior, my Father, and my home. It must be a light from heaven that must show me heaven, and a light accompanied with vital heat that must turn to love and joy within me. O let me not have only dreaming knowledge of words and signs, but quickening light, to show the things which these words do signify, to my mind and heart. Surely, the faith by which we must live, must be a living faith, and must reach further than to words, how true soever. Can faith live in the dark? What is it but an effect of thine illumination? What is my unbelief but the darkness of my soul? Lord Jesus, scatter all these mists! Make thy way, O thou Sun of Righteousness, into this benighted mind! O send thine advocate to silence every temptation that is against thy truth and thee; and thine agent to prosecute thy cause against thine enemies and mine, and to be the resident witness of thy verity, and my sonship and salvation. Hearing of thee is not satisfactory to me: it must be the presence and operation of thy light and love, shed abroad by thy Spirit on my heart, that must quiet and content my soul. I confess, with shame, that I have sinned against heaven and before thee, and am unworthy to have any glimpse or taste of heaven; but so did many that are now entertained and feasted by thy love in glory.

My Lord, I know that heaven is not far from me: it is not, I believe, one day's or hour's journey to a separated soul. How quick is the communion of my eyes with the sun, that seems far off! and couldst thou not show it me in a moment? Is not faith a seeing grace? It can see the invisible God, the unseen world, the new Jerusalem, the innumerable angels, and the spirits of the perfected just, if it be animated by thine influx; without which it can do nothing, and is nothing. Thou, that oft healedst the blind here in the flesh, didst tell us that it is much more thy work to illuminate

souls. It is but forgiving all my sins, and removing this film that sin hath gathered, and my illuminated soul will see thy glory. I know that the veil of flesh must be also rent before I shall see thee with open face, and know my fellow-citizens above as I am known. It is not heaven on earth that I am begging for ; but that I may see it from Mount Nebo, and have the bunch of grapes, the pledge and the first-fruits, that faith and hope which may kindle love and desire, and make me run my race in patience, and live and die in the joy which beseemeth an heir of heaven.

But if my part on earth must be no greater than yet it is, let it make me the wearier of this dungeon, and groan more fervently to be with thee, and long for the day when all my longing shall be satisfied, and my soul be filled with thy light and love.

2. And, doubtless, as I shall love the angels and saints in heaven, so I shall, some way, in subordination to Christ, be a receiver from them. Our love will be mutual ; and which way soever I owe duty, I shall expect some answerable return of benefit. The sun shineth upon the stars, as well as upon the earth, and stars on one another. If angels are greatly useful to me here, it is like they will be much more there, where I shall be a more capable receiver. It will be no diminution to Christ's honor, that he there maketh use of my fellow-creatures to my joy, no more than it is here. The whole creation will still be one compaginated frame ; and the heavenly society will forever retain their relation to each other, and their aptitude and disposition to the duties and benefits of those relations. And as we shall be far fitter for them than here we are, so shall we have far more comfort in them. How gloriously will God shine in the glory of the blessed ! How delightful will it be to see their perfection, in wisdom, holiness, love and concord ! What voices they use, or what communication, instead of voices, we shall shortly know ; but surely there is a blessed harmony of minds, and wills, and practice. All are not equal ; but all accord to love and praise their glorious God, and readily to obey him, and perfectly to love each other. There is no jarring, or discordant spirit that is out of tune ; no separation or opposition to each other. As God's love in Christ is our full and final happiness, so nature, which hath made us sociable, teacheth us to desire to be loved of each other, but especially by wise and worthy persons. Saints and angels in heaven will love incomparably better than our dearest friends on earth can do, and better than they did themselves when we were on earth ; for they will love that best which is best, and where there is most of God appearing ; else it were not intellectual love. And therefore they will love us as much better when we come to heaven, as we shall be better. If

we go from loving friends on earth, we shall go to them that love us far more. The love of those here doth but pity us in our pains, and go weeping with our carcasses to the grave; but the love of those above will joyfully convoy, or welcome, our souls to their triumphant society. All the holy friends that we thought we had lost, that went before us, we shall find rejoicing there with Christ.

And, O, what a glorious state will be that common uniting, and united love! If two or three candles joined together make a greater flame and light, what would ten thousand stars united do? When all the love of angels and saints in full perfection shall be so united, as to make one love, to God that is one, and to one another, who are there all one in Christ, O what a glorious love will that be! That love and joy will be the same thing; and that one universal love will be one universal joy.

Little know we how great a mercy it is to be here commanded to love our neighbors as ourselves; and much more, to be effectually taught of God so to love one another. And did we all here live in such unfeigned love, we should be like to heaven, as bearing the image of the God of Love; but, alas! our societies here are small; our goodness, which is our amiableness, wofully imperfect and mixed with loathsome sin and discord: but there, a whole heaven full of blessed spirits will flame forever, in perfect love to God, to Christ, and one another.

Go, then, go willingly, O my soul! Love joineth with light to draw up thy desires! Nature inclineth all things unto union: even the lifeless elements have an aggregative motion, by which the parts, when violently separated, do hastily return to their natural adhesion. Art thou a lover of wisdom, and wouldest thou not be united to the wise? Art thou a lover of holiness, and wouldest thou not be united to the holy, who are made of love? Art thou a hater of enmity, discord, and divisions, and a lover of unity here on earth, and wouldest thou not be where all the just are one? It is not an unnatural union to thy loss; nothing shall be taken from thee by it: thou shalt receive by it more than thou canst contribute; it shall not be forced against thy will; it is but a union of minds and wills; a perfect union of loves. Let not natural or sinful selfishness cause thee to think suspiciously or hardly of it, for it is thy happiness and end. What got the angels that fell to selfishness, from unity? and what got Adam, that followed them herein? The further any man goeth from unity, by selfishness, the deeper he falleth into sin and misery from God. And what doth grace but call us back from sin and selfishness, to God's unity again? Dote not, then, on this dark, divided world. Is not thy body, while the parts by an uniting soul are kept together, and make one, in a better state, than when it is crumbled into lifeless

dust? And doth not death creep on thee by a gradual dissolution? Away, then, from this sandy, incoherent state; the further from the centre, the further from unity. A unity indeed there is of all things; but it is one heavenly life, and light, and love, which is the true felicitating union.

We dispute here whether the aggregative motion of separated parts (as in *descensu gravium*) be from a motive principle in the part, or by the attraction of the whole, or by any external impulse. It is like that there is somewhat of all these; but sure the greatest cause is like to do most to the effect. The body of the earth hath more power to attract a clod, or stone, than the intrinsic principle to move it downwards; but intrinsic gravity is also necessary. The superior attractive love and loveliness must do more to draw up this mind to God, than my intrinsic holiness to move it upward; but without this holiness, the soul would not be capable of feeling that attractive influx. Every grace cometh from God, to fit and lead up my soul to God. Faith, therefore, believeth the heavenly state, and love doth, with some delight, desire it, and hope gapeth after it, that I may at last attain it.

They that have pleaded against propriety, and would have all things common in this world, have forgotten that there is a propriety in our present egoity and natural constitution, which rendereth some accidental propriety necessary to us. Every man hath his own bodily parts and inherent accidents; and every man must have his own food, his own place, clothing, and acquisitions; his own children, and, therefore, his own wife, &c. But that the greatest perfection is most for community, as far as nature is capable of it, God would show us, in making the first receivers of the extraordinary pourings-out of his Spirit, to sell all, and voluntarily make all common, none saying, This or that is my own; which was not done by any constraining law, but by the law or power of uniting love: they were first all as of one heart and soul; Acts iv. 32.

Take not, then, thy inordinate desire of propriety for thy health, but for thy sickness; cherish it not, and be not afraid to lose it, and measure not the heavenly felicity by it: spirits are penetrable; they claim not so much as a propriety of place, as bodies do. It is thy weakness and state of imperfection now which maketh it so desirable to thee that thy house should be thine, and no one's but thine; thy land be thine, and no one's but thine; thy clothes, thy books, yea, thy knowledge and grace, be thine, and no one's but thine. How much more excellent a state were it, (if we were here capable of it,) if we could say, that all these are as the common light of the sun, which is mine, and every one's as well as mine! Why are we so desirous to speak all languages, but that

we might understand all men, and be understood of all, and so might make our sentiments as common as is possible? Whence is it that men are so addicted to talkativeness, but that nature would make all our thoughts and passions as common as it can? And why else are learned men so desirous to propagate their learning, and godly men so desirous to make all others wise and godly? It seemeth one of the greatest calamities of this life, that when a man hath, with the longest and hardest study, attained to much knowledge, he cannot bequeath it, or any part of it, to his heir, or any person when he dieth, but every man must acquire it for himself; and when God hath sanctified the parents, they cannot communicate their holiness to their children, (though God promise to bless them on their account.) Much less can any man make his grace or knowledge common: nature and grace incline us to desire it; but we cannot do it. For this end we talk, and preach, and write; for this end we study to be as plain, and convincing and moving as we can, that we make our knowledge and affections as common to our hearers and readers as we can. And, O, what a blessed work should we take preaching and writing for, if we could make them all know but what we know, and love what we are persuading them to love! There would then be no need of schools and universities: a few hours would do more than they do in an age. But, alas! how rare is it for a father of excellent learning and piety to have one son like himself, after all his industry!

Is not the heavenly communion, then, desirable, where every man shall have his own, and yet his own be common to all others? My knowledge shall be my own, and other men's as well as mine; my goodness shall be my own and theirs; my glory and felicity shall be mine and theirs; and theirs also shall be mine as well as theirs. The knowledge, the goodness, the glory, of all the heavenly society, shall be mine, according to my capacity: grace is the seed of such a state, which maketh us all one in Christ, (neither Barbarian nor Scythian, circumcision nor uncircumcision, bond nor free,) by giving us to love our neighbors as ourselves, and to love both our neighbors and ourselves, for Christ, and Christ in all: well might Paul say, All things are yours. But it is here but as in the seed; the perfect union and communion is hereafter. Earth and heaven must be distinguished; we must not extend our hopes or pretensions here beyond the capacity of our natures. As perfect holiness and knowledge, so perfect unity and concord, is proper to heaven, and is not here to be expected. The Papal pretensions of an impossible union in one governor of all the earth, is the means to hinder that union which is possible. But the state of perfection is the state of perfect union and communion. Hasten, then, upwards, O my soul, with the ferventest desires, and breathe

after that state with the strongest hopes ; where thou shalt not be rich, and see thy neighbors poor about thee ; nor be poor, while they are rich ; nor be well while they are sick, or sick while they are well ; but their riches, their health, their joy, will be all thine, and thine will be all theirs, as the common light ; and none will have the less for the participation of the rest ; yea, communion will be part of every one's felicity ; it constituteth the very being of the city of God. This celestial communion of saints in one holy church, above what is here to be attained, is now an article of our belief ; but believing will soon end in seeing and enjoying.

V. The Constitutive Reasons from the Heavenly Life or Practice.

Seeing and loving will be the heavenly life ; but yet it seemeth that, besides these, there will be executive powers, and, therefore, some answerable practice. There are good works in heaven, and far more and better than on earth. For, 1. there will be more vital activity, and, therefore, more exercise for it ; for the power is for action. 2. There will be more love to God and one another ; and love is active. 3. There will be more likeness to God and our Redeemer, who is communicative, and doth good, as he is good. 4. Our union with Christ, who will be everlastingly beneficent, as well as benevolent, will make us in our places also beneficent. 5. Our communion in the city of God will prove that we shall all bear our part as the members of the body, in contributing to the welfare of the whole, and in the common returns to God.

But what are the heavenly works we must perfectly know when we come thither ? In general, we know, 1. That they will be the works of love to God and to his creatures ; that is, such as love inclineth us to exercise. 2. And they will be works of obedience to God ; that is, such as we shall do to please his will, and because he willeth them to be our duty. 3. They will be useful works to others. 4. They will be pleasant to ourselves, and part of our felicity. 5. And they will carry all to God, our end.

And somewhat of them is particularly described in the Holy Scriptures ; as, 1. We shall, in concord with the holy society, or choir, give thanks and praise to God and our Redeemer ; Rev. xix. 5. 1 Pet. iv. 11. Rev. vii. 4. and iv. 7. 11. and v. 13. and vii. 12. and xix. 1. Phil. iv. 20. Whether there be any voice, or only such spiritual activity and exultation as to man, in flesh, is not to be clearly understood, is not fit for us here to presume to determine : it will be somewhat more high and excellent than our vocal praise and singing is ; and of which this beareth some ana-

logical resemblance or signification. As all passions earnestly desire vent and exercise, so specially do our holy affections of love, joy, and admiration of God Almighty. And there is in us a desire of communion with many in such affections and expressions. Methinks, when we are singing or speaking God's praise in the great assemblies, with joyful and fervent souls, I have the liveliest foretaste of heaven on earth; and I could almost wish that our voices were loud enough to reach through all the world, and unto heaven itself; nor could I ever be offended (as many are) at the organs, and other convenient music, soberly and seasonably used, which excite and help to tune my soul in so holy a work, in which no true assistance is to be despised. No work more comforteth me in my greatest sufferings, none seemeth more congruous and pleasant to me while I wait for death, than psalms, and words of praise to God; nor is there any exercise in which I had rather end my life: and should I not, then, willingly go to the heavenly choir, where God is praised with perfect love, and joy, and harmony? Had I more of a praising frame of soul, it would make me long more for that life of praise. For I never find myself more willing to be there than when I most joyfully speak or sing God's praise. Though the dead praise not God in the grave, and dust doth not give him thanks, yet living souls in heaven do it joyfully, while their fleshly clothing turns to dust.

Lord, tune my soul to thy praises now, that sweet experience may make me long to be where I shall do it better! I see where any excellent music is, nature maketh men flock to it; and they that are but hearers, yet join by a concurrent fancy and delight: surely, if I had once heard the heavenly choir, I should echo to their holy songs, though I could not imitate them; and I should think it the truest blessedness to be there, and bear my part. My God, the voice of thy comforting Spirit, speaking thy love effectually to my soul, would make such holy music in me, that would incline me to the celestial concert; and without it all these thoughts and words will be in vain. It is the inward melody of thy Spirit and my conscience that must tune me to desire the heavenly melody. O speak thy love first to my heart, and then I shall joyfully speak it to my brethren, and shall ambitiously seek that communion of them that praise thee better than sinful, groaning mortals can: and though my sins here make a loathed jar and discord in my songs, I hope my groans for those sins, and their effects, will make no discord. Sighs and tears have had the honor to be accepted by thee, who despisest not a contrite soul: but if thy Spirit will sing and speak within me, and help me against the discordant murmurs of my unbelieving heart, and pained flesh, I shall offer thee that which is more suitable to thy love and grace.

I confess, Lord, that daily tears and sighs are not unsuitable to the eyes and voice of so great a sinner, who is under thy correcting rod. What better could I expect when I grieved thy Spirit, than that it should prove my grief? Yea, this is far better than the genuine effects of sin. But this is not it that is meetest to be offered to the God of love: he that offereth praise doth glorify thee: and is not this the spiritual sacrifice accepted through Christ, for which we were made priests to God? 1 Pet. ii. 5. I refuse not, Lord, to lie in tears and groans when thou requirest it; and do not thou refuse those tears and groans; but O give me better, that I may have better of thine own to offer thee; and by this prepare me for the far better, which I shall find with Christ; and that which is best to us thy creatures will be accepted as best by thee, who art glorified and pleased in the perfection of thy works.

2. It is, at least, very probable that God maketh glorified spirits his agents and ministers of much of his beneficence to the creatures that are below them. For, (1.) We see that where he endueth any creature with the noblest endowments, he maketh most use of that creature to the benefit of others: we shall in heaven be most furnished to do good; and that furniture will not be unused. (2.) And Christ tells us that we shall be like, or equal to, the angels; which, though it mean not simply and in all things, yet it meaneth more than to be above carnal generation; for it speaketh of a similitude of nature and state as the reason of the other. And that the angels are God's ministers for the good of his chosen in this world, and administrators of much of the affairs on earth, is past all doubt. (3.) The apostle telleth us that the saints shall judge the world and angels; and judging in Scripture is oft put for ruling. It is therefore probable, at least, that the devils, and the damned, shall be put under the saints, and that, with the angels, they shall be employed in some ministerial oversight of the inhabitants and affairs of the promised new earth. (4.) And when even the more noble superior bodies, even the stars, are of so great use and influx to inferior bodies, it is like that, accordingly, superior spirits will be of use to the inhabitants of the world below them.

But I think it not meet to venture here upon uncertain conjectures beyond the revelation of God's word, and therefore shall add no more, but conclude that God knoweth what use to make of us hereafter as well as here, and that if there were no more for us to do in heaven, but with perfect knowledge, love, and joy, to hold communion with God and all the heavenly society, it were enough to attract a sensible and considerate soul to fervent desires to be at home with God.

And here I must not overpass my rejection of the injurious

opinion of too many philosophers and divines, who exclude all sense and affection from heaven, and acknowledge nothing there but intellect and will ; and this is because they find sense and affection in the brutes ; and they think that the souls of brutes are but some quality, or perishing temperament of matter, and, therefore, that sense and affection is in us no better.

But, 1. What felicity can we conceive of without any affection of delight or joy ? Certainly bare volition now without these doth seem to be no felicity to us ; nor knowledge neither, if there were no delight in knowing.

2. Yea, I leave it to men's experience to judge, whether there be now any such thing in us as proper willing, which is not also some internal sense of, and affection to, the good which we will : if it be complacency, or the pleasedness of the will, this signifies some pleasure ; and love, in the first act, is nothing else but such an appetite : if it be desire, it hath in it a pleasedness in the thing desired, as in *esse cognito*, as it is thought on by us ; and what is love without all sense and affection ?

3. Why doth the Scripture ascribe love and joy to God and angels if there were not some reason for it ? Doubtless there is great difference between the heavenly love and joy, and ours here in the body ; and so there is also between their knowledge and ours, and their will and ours : but it is not that theirs is less or lower than ours, but somewhat more excellent, which ours giveth us some analogical, or imperfect, formal notion of.

4. And what though brutes have sense and affection, doth it therefore follow that we have none now ? or that we shall have none hereafter ? Brutes have life ; and must we therefore have no life hereafter, because it is a thing that is common to brutes ? Rather, as now we have all that the brutes have, and more, so shall we then have life, and sense, and affection, of a nobler sort than brutes, and more. Is not God the living God ? Shall we say that he liveth not because brutes live ? or, rather, that they live a sensitive life, and man a sensitive and intellectual, because God is essential, transcendent, infinite life, that makes them live.

5. But if they say that there is no sensation or affection but by bodily organs, I answered before to that : the body feeleth nothing at all, but the soul in the body : the soul uniteth itself most nearly to the igneous ærial parts, called the spirits ; and in them it feeleth, seeth, tasteth, smelleth, &c. And that soul that feeleth and seeth, doth also inwardly love, desire and rejoice ; and that soul which doth this in the body, hath the same power and faculty out of the body : and if they judge by the cessation of sensation, when the organs are undisposed, or dead, so they might as well conclude against our future intellection and will, whose operation

in an apoplexy we no more perceive than that of sense. But I have before showed that the soul will not want exercise for its essential faculties, for want of objects, or bodily organs; and that men conclude basely of the souls of brutes, as if they were not an enduring substance, without any proof or probability; and tell us idle dreams, that they are but vanishing temperaments, &c., which are founded on another dream, that fire (or the motive, illuminative, calefactive cause) is no substance neither; and so our unnatural somatists know none of the most excellent substances, which actuate all the rest, but only the more base and gross, which are actuated by them: and they think they have well acquitted themselves by telling us of subtile, active matter and motion, without understanding what any living, active, motive faculty or virtue is. And because no man knoweth what God doth with the souls of brutes, (whether they are only one common sensitive soul of a more common body, or whether individuate still, and transmigrant from body to body, or what else,) therefore they make ignorance a plea for error, and feign them to be no substances, or to be annihilated.

I doubt not but sensation (as is aforesaid) is an excellent operation of the essential faculties of real substances, called spirits; and that the highest and noblest creatures have it in the highest excellency; and though God, that fitteth every thing to its use, hath given, *e. g.* a dog more perfect sense of smelling than a man, yet man's internal sense is far more excellent than the brutes', and thereby is an advantage to our intellection, volition, and joy, here in the flesh; and that in heaven we shall have not less, but more, even more excellent sense and affections of love and joy, as well as more excellent intellection and volition; but such as we cannot now clearly conceive of.

Therefore, there is great reason for all those analogical collections which I have mentioned in my book called 'The Saint's Rest' from the present operations and pleasures of the soul in flesh, to help our conceptions of its future pleasures; and though we cannot conclude that they will not inconceivably differ in their manner from what we now feel, I doubt not but feel and rejoice we shall, as certainly as live, and that the soul is essential life, and that our life, and feeling, and joy, will be inconceivably better.

The Concluding Application.

I am convinced that it is far better to depart and be with Christ than to be here: but there is much more than such conviction necessary to bring up my soul to such desires. Still there resisteth, **I.** The natural averseness to death, which God hath put into every

animal, and which is become inordinate and too strong by sin. II. The remnants of unbelief, taking advantage of our darkness here in the flesh, and our too much familiarity with this visible world. III. The want of more lively foretastes in a heavenly mind and love, through weakness of grace, and the fear of guilt. These stand up against all that is said; and words will not overcome them: what, then, must be done? Is there no remedy?

There is a special sort of the teaching of God, by which we must learn "so to number our days as to apply our hearts to wisdom;" without which, we shall never, effectually, practically, and savingly, learn either this or any the most common, obvious, and easy lesson. When we have read, and heard, and spoken, and written, the soundest truth and certainest arguments, we know yet as if we knew not, and believe as if we believed not, with a slight and dreaming kind of apprehension, till God, by a special illumination, bring the same things clearly to our minds, and awaken the soul by a special suscitation, to feel what we know, and suit the soul to the truth revealed by an influx of his love, which giveth us a pleasing sense of the amiableness and congruity of the things proposed. Since we separated ourselves from God, there is a hedge of separation between our senses and our understandings, and between our understandings and our wills and affections, so that the communion between them is violated, and we are divided in ourselves by this schism in our faculties. All men still see the demonstrations of divine perfections in the world, and every part thereof; and yet how little is God known! All men may easily know that there is a God, who is almighty, omniscient, goodness itself, eternal, omnipresent, the Maker, Preserver and Governor of all, who should have our whole trust, and love, and obedience; and yet how little of this knowledge is to be perceived in men's hearts to themselves, or in their lives to others! All men know that the world is vanity; that men must die; that riches then profit not; that time is precious; and that we have only this little time to prepare for that which we must receive hereafter; and yet how little do men seem to know, indeed, of all such things as no man doubts of! And when God doth come in with his powerful, awakening light and love, then all these things have another appearance of affecting reality than they had before; as if but now we began to know them: words, doctrines, persons, things, do seem as newly known to us.

All my best reasons for our immortality and future life are but as the new-formed body of Adam, before God breathed into him the breath of life. It is he that must make them living reasons. To the Father of Lights, therefore, I must still look up, and for his light and love I must still wait, as for his blessing on the food

which I have eaten, which must concoct it into my living substance. Arguments will be but undigested food, till God's effectual influx do digest them. I must learn both as a student and a beggar: when I have thought, and thought a thousand times, I must beg thy blessing, Lord, upon my thoughts, or they will all be but dullness or self-distraction. If there be no motion, light, and life here, without the influx of the sun, what can souls do, or receive, or feel, without thy influx? This world will be to us, without thy grace, as a grave or dungeon, where we shall lie in death and darkness. The eye of my understanding, and all its thoughts, will be useless or vexatious to me, without thine illuminating beams. O shine the soul of thy servant into a clearer knowledge of thyself and kingdom, and love him into more divine and heavenly love, and then he will willingly come to thee.

I. And why should I strive, by the fears of death, against the common course of nature, and against my only hopes of happiness? Is it not appointed for all men once to die? Would I have God to alter this determinate course, and make sinful man immortal upon earth? When we are sinless, we shall be immortal. The love of life was given to teach me to preserve it carefully, and use it well, and not to torment me with the continual, troubling foresight of death. Shall I make myself more miserable than the vegetatives and brutes? Neither they nor I do grieve that my flowers must fade and die, and that my sweet and pleasant fruits must fall, and the trees be unclothed of their beauteous leaves until the spring. Birds, and beasts, and fishes, and worms, have all a self-preserving fear of death, which urgeth them to fly from danger; but few, if any of them, have a tormenting fear arising from the forethoughts that they must die. To the body, death is less troublesome than sleep; for in sleep I may have disquieting pains or dreams; and yet I fear not going to my bed. But of this before.

If it be the misery after death that is feared, O, what have I now to do, but to receive the free, reconciling grace that is offered me from heaven, to save me from such misery, and to devote myself totally to him who hath promised that those that come to him he will in no wise cast out!

But this cometh by my selfishness. Had I studied my duty, and then remembered that I am not mine own, and that it is God's part, and not mine, to determine of the duration of my life, I had been quiet from these fruitless fears. But when I fell to myself, from God, I am fallen to care for myself, as if it were my work to measure out my days: and now I trust not God, as I should do, with his own. And had my resignation and devotedness to him been more absolute, my trust in him would have been more easy. But, Lord, thou knowest that I would fain be thine, and wholly

thine; and it is to thee that I desire to live: therefore let me quietly die to thee, and wholly trust thee with my soul.

II. And why should my want of formal conceptions of the future state of separated souls, and my strangeness to the manner of their subsistence and operations, induce me to doubt of those generals, which are evident, and beyond all rational doubting? That souls are substances, and not annihilated, and essentially the same, when they forsake the body, as before, I doubt not. Otherwise, neither the Christian's resurrection, nor the Pythagorean's transmigration, were a possible thing. For, if the soul cease to be, it cannot pass into another body, nor can it reënter into this. If God raise this body, then it must be by another soul. For the same soul to be annihilated, and yet to begin again to be, is a contradiction; for the second beginning would be by creation, which maketh a new soul, and not the same that was before. It is the invisible things that are excellent, active, operative, and permanent. The visible (excepting light, which maketh all things else visible) are of themselves but lifeless dross. It is the unseen part of plants and flowers which causeth all their growth and beauty, their fruit and sweetness. Passive matter is but moved up and down by the invisible active powers, as chess-men are moved from place to place by the gamester's hands. What a loathsome corpse were the world, without the invisible spirits and natures that animate, actuate, or move it. To doubt of the being or continuation of the most excellent, spiritual parts of the creation, when we live in a world that is actuated by them, and where every thing demonstrates them, as their effects, is more foolish than to doubt of the being of these gross materials which we see.

How oft have I been convinced that there are good spirits with whom our souls have as certain communion, though not so sensible, as our life hath with the sun, and we have with one another! And that there are evil and envious spirits that fight against our holiness and peace, as certain narratives of apparitions and witches, and too sad experience of temptations, do evince. And the marvelous diversity of creatures on earth, for kind and number; yea, the diversity of stars in heaven, as well as the diversities of angels and devils, do partly tell me, that though all be of one, and through one, and to one, yet absolute unity is the divine prerogative, and we must not presume to expect such perfection as to lose our specific or numerical diversity, by any union which shall befall our souls. Nor can I reasonably doubt that so noble and active a nature as souls dwelling above in the lucid regions, in communion with their like, and with their betters, shall be without the activity, the pleasure and felicity, which is suitable to their nature, their region, and their company. And my Savior hath en-

tered into the holiest, and hath assured me that there are many mansions in his Father's house ; and that when we are absent from the body we shall be present with the Lord.

Organical sight is given me for my use here in the body ; and a serpent or hawk hath as much or more of this than I have. Mental knowledge reacheth further than sight, and is the act of a nobler faculty, and for a higher use. Though it be the soul itself embodied in the igneous spirits that seeth, yet it is by a higher and more useful faculty that it understandeth ; and faith is not an understanding act : it knoweth things unseen, because they are revealed. Who can think that all believing, holy souls, that have passed hence from the beginning of the world, have been deceived in their faith and hope ? And that all the wicked, worldly infidels, whose hope was only in this life, have been the wisest men, and have been in the right ? If virtue and piety are faults or follies, and brutish sensuality be best, then why are not laws made to command sensuality, and forbid piety and virtue ? To say this, is to deny humanity, and the wisdom of our Creator, and to feign the world to be governed by a lie, and to take the perfection of our nature for its disease, and our greatest disease for our perfection. But if piety and virtue be better than impiety and vice, the principles and necessary motives of them are certainly true, and the exercise of them is not in vain. What abominable folly and wickedness were it to say that the wicked only attain their ends, and that they all lose their labor, and live and die in miserable deceit, who seek to please God in hope of a better life to come, believing that God is the rewarder of them that diligently seek him ! Would not this justify the foolish Manichees, that thought a bad God made this world ; yea, and would infer that he not only made us for a mischief, but ruleth us to our deceit and hurt, and giveth us both natural and supernatural laws, in ill-will to us, to mislead us to our misery, and to fill our lives with needless troubles ? Shall I not abhor every suggestion that containeth such inhuman absurdities as these ? Wonderful, that Satan can keep up so much unbelief in the world, while he must make men such fools, that he may make them unbelievers and ungodly !

III. That my soul is no more heavenly, and my foretaste of future blessedness is so small, is partly the fruit of those many willful sins by which I have quenched the Spirit that should be my Comforter ; and it is partly from our common state of darkness and strangeness, while the soul is in the flesh, and operateth as the body's form, according to its interest and capacity. Affections are more easily stirred up to things seen, than to things that are both unseen and known only very defectively, by general, and not by clear, distinct apprehensions. And yet this, O this, is the misery and bur-

den of my soul! Though I can say that I love God's truth and graces, his work, and his servants, and whatever of God I see in the world, and that this is a love of God in his creatures, word and works; yet that I have no more desiring and delightful love of heaven, where his loveliness will be more fully opened to my soul, and that the thoughts of my speedy appearing there are no more joyful to me than they are, is my sin, and my calamity, and my shame. And if I did not see that it is so with other of the servants of Christ, as well as with me, I should doubt whether affections so unproportionable to my profession did not signify unsoundness in my belief. It is strange and shameful, that one that expecteth quickly to see the glorious world, and to enter the holy, celestial society, should be no more joyfully affected with these hopes, and that I should make any great matter of the pain, and languishing, and perishing of the flesh, when it is the common way to such an end. O hateful sin! that hath so darkened and corrupted souls as to estrange and indispose them to the only state of their hoped happiness. Alas! what did man when he forsook the love and obedience of his God? How just it is, that this flesh and world should become our prison, which we would make our home, and would not use as our Lord appointed us, as our servant and way to our better state! Though our way must not be our home, our Father would not have been so strange to us in the way, if we had not unthankfully turned away from his grace and love.

It is to us that know not the mysteries of infinite wisdom, the saddest thought that ever doth possess our minds, to consider that there is no more grace and holiness, knowledge of God, and communion with him in this world. That so few are saints, and those few so lamentably defective and imperfect. That when the sun shineth on all the earth, the Sun of Righteousness shineth on so small a part of it, and so few live in the love of God, and the joyful hopes of future blessedness; and those few have so low a measure of it, and are corrupted and troubled with so many contrary affections. Infinite goodness is not undisposed to do good. He that made us capable of holy and heavenly affections, gave us not that capacity in vain; and yet, alas! how little of God and glory taketh up the hearts of men!

But man hath no cause to grudge at God. The devils, before their fall, were not made infectible: divine wisdom is delighted in the diversity of his works, and maketh them not all of equal excellency. Free will was to act its part: hell is not to be as good as heaven: and sin hath made earth to be next to hell; so much sin, so much hell. What is sin but a willful forsaking of God? And can we forsake him, and yet love him, and enjoy his

love? God's kingdom is not to be judged of by his gaol or gibbets. We willfully forsook the light, and made the world a dungeon to ourselves. And when recovering light doth shine unto us, how unthankfully do we usually entertain it! We cannot have the conduct and comfort of it while we shut our eyes and turn away. And what though God give not all men an overcoming measure, nor to the best so much as they desire: the earth is but a spot, or print of God's creation; not so much as an ant-hillock to a kingdom, or, perhaps, to all the earth. And who is scandalized because the world hath an heap of ants in it, yea, or a nest of snakes, that are not men? The vast, unmeasurable worlds of light, which are above us, are possessed by inhabitants suitable to their glory. A casement or crevice of light, or a candle in this darksome world, is an unspeakable mercy; yea, that we may but hear of a better world and may seek it in hope. We must not grudge that in our prison we have not that presence of our King, and pleasures of the kingdom, as innocent and free subjects have: hope of pardon, and a speedy deliverance, are great mercies to malefactors.

And if my want of the knowledge and love of God, and joyful communion with the heavenly society, be my prison, and as the suburbs of hell, should it not make me long for the day of my redemption, and the glorious liberty of the sons of God? My true desires of deliverance, and of holiness and perfection, are my evidences that I shall obtain them. As the will is the sinner, so it is the obstinate continuance of a will to sin, which is the bondage, and the cause of continued sin; and a continued hell is continued sin, as to the first part at least. Therefore, they that continue in hell do continue in a sinning will, and so continue in a love and willingness of so much of hell. So far as God maketh us willing to be delivered from sin, so far we are delivered; and our initial, imperfect deliverance is the way to more. If pains, then, make me groan for ease, and sickness make me wish for health, why should not my remnants of ignorance, unbelief, and strangeness to God, occasion me to long for the day of my salvation? This is the greatest of all my troubles; and should it not then be the greatest wearying burden from which I should earnestly desire to be eased? As grace never doth hurt efficiently, and yet may be ill used, and do hurt objectively, (as to them that are proud of it,) so sin never doth good efficiently, and of itself, and yet objectively may do good; for sin may be the object of grace, and so to use it, is not sin. My unbelief, and darkness, and disaffection, and inordinate love of this life, do, of themselves, most hinder my desires of deliverance, and of a better life; but, objectively, what more fit to make me weary of such a grievous state? Were my

unbelief and earthly mind predominant, they would chain my affections to this world; or, if I were constrainedly weary of a miserable life, I should have no comfortable hopes of a better. But as it is the nature of my sin to draw down my heart from God and glory, it is the nature of my faith, and hope, and love, to carry it upward, and to desire the heavenly perfection; not to love death, but to love that which is beyond it. And have I been so many years in the school of Christ, learning both how to live and die, begging and studying for this grace, and exercising it against this sinful flesh, and shall I now, after all, find flesh more powerful to draw me downward, than faith, hope, and love, to carry my desires up to God?

O God forbid! O thou that freely gavest me thy grace, maintain it to the last against its enemies, and make it finally victorious! It came from thee; it hath been preserved by thee; it is on thy side, and wholly for thee. O let it not now fail, and be conquered by blind and base carnality, or by the temptations of a hellish conquered enemy; without it I had lived as a beast, and without it I should die more miserably than a beast. It is thine image which thou lovest; it is a divine nature and heavenly beam. What will a soul be without it, but a dungeon of darkness, a devil for malignity, and dead to holiness and heaven? Without it, who shall plead thy cause against the devil, world, and flesh? Without thy glory, earth is but earth: without thy natural efficacy, it would be nothing: without thy wise and potent ordination, it would be but a chaos; and, without thy grace, it would be a hell. O rather deny me the light of the sun, than the light of thy countenance! Less miserable had I been without life or being, than without thy grace. Without thee, and my Savior's help, I can do nothing; I did not live without thee; I could not pray or learn without thee; I never could conquer a temptation without thee; and can I die, or be prepared to die, without thee? Alas! I shall but say as Philip of Christ, "I know not whither my soul is going, and how then shall I know the way?" My Lord, having loved his own in the world, did love them to the end. Thou lovest fidelity and perseverance in thy servants: even those that in his sufferings forsook him and fled, yet are commended and rewarded by Christ, for continuing with him in his temptations; Luke xxii. 28. And wilt thou forsake a sinner in his extremity, who consenteth to thy covenant, and would not forsake thee? My God, I have often sinned against thee; but yet thou knowest I would fain be thine: I have not served thee with the resolution, fidelity, and delight, as such a master should have been served, but yet I would not forsake thy service, nor change my master, or my work. I can say, with thy servant Paul, that thou art the God whose I am, and

whom I serve: (Acts xxvii. 23.) and O that I could serve thee better! For to serve thee is but to receive thy grace, and to use it for my own and others' good, and so to glorify thee, and please thy will, which, being love itself, is best pleased when we receive and do most good. I have not loved thee as infinite goodness, and love itself, and fatherly bounty, should have been loved; but yet I would not forsake thy family; and nothing in this world is more my grief, than that I love thee no more. Forsake not, then, a sinner that would not forsake thee, that looketh every hour towards thee; that feeleth it as a piece of hell to be so dark and strange unto thee; that gropeth, and groaneth, and gaspeth after thee; feeling, to his greatest sorrow, (though thou art every where,) that while he is present in the body, he is absent from the Lord. My Lord, I have nothing to do in this world, but to seek and serve thee. I have nothing to do with a heart and its affections, but to breathe after thee. I have nothing to do with my tongue and pen, but to speak to thee, and for thee, and to publish thy glory and thy will. What have I to do with all my reputation, and interest in my friends, but to increase thy church, and propagate thy holy truth and service? What have I to do with my remaining time, even these last and languishing hours, but to look up unto thee, and wait for thy grace and thy salvation? O pardon all my carnal thoughts, and all my unthankful neglects of thy precious grace and love, and all my willful sin against thy truth and thee; and let the fuller communications of thy forfeited grace now tell me by experience that thou dost forgive me! Even under the terrible law thou didst tell man thy very nature, by proclaiming thy name, "The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity, and transgression, and sin;" Exod. xxxiv. 6, 7. And is not the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ revealed in the gospel for our more abundant faith and consolation? My God, I know, as I cannot love thee according to thy loveliness, so I cannot trust thee according to thy faithfulness: I can never be sufficiently confident of thy all-sufficient power, thy wisdom, and thy goodness. When I have said as Psalm lxxvii. 7, "Will the Lord cast off forever? And will he be favorable no more? Is his mercy clean gone forever? Doth his promise fail to generations? Hath God forgotten to be gracious? Hath he in anger shut up his tender mercies?" conscience hath replied, that this is my infirmity: I never wanted comfort, because thou wantedst mercy; but because I wanted faith and fitness to receive it and perceive it. But hast thou not mercy also to give me, even that fitness, and that faith? My God, all is of thee, and through thee, and all is to thee; and when I have the felicity, the glory of

all forever will be thine. None that trusteth in thee (according to thy nature and promise) shall be ashamed. If I can live and die in trusting in thee, surely I shall not be confounded.

Why, then, should it seem a difficult question, how I may, willingly, leave this world, and my soul depart to Christ in peace? The same grace which regenerated me, must bring me to my desired end, as the same principle of vegetation which causeth the end, must bring the fruit to sweet maturity, I. Believe and trust thy Father, thy Savior, and thy Comforter. II. And hope for the joyful entertainments of his love, and for the blessed state which he hath promised. III. And long, by love, for nearer union and communion with him; and thus, O my soul, thou mayest depart in peace.

I. How sure is the promise of God! How suitable to his love, and to the nature of our souls, and to the operations of every grace! It is initially performed here, whilst our desires are turned towards him, and the heavenly seed and spark is here ingenerated in a soul that was dead, and dark, and disaffected. Is it any strange thing for fire to ascend? yea, or the fiery principle of vegetation in a tree, to carry up the earthy matter to a great height? Is it strange that rivers should hasten to the sea? Whither should spirits go but to the region or world of spirits? And whither should Christ's members and holy spirits go but to himself, and the heavenly society? And is not that a more holy and glorious place and state than this below? Earth is between heaven and hell; a place of gross and passive matter, where spirits may, indeed, operate upon that which needeth them, and where they may be detained a while in such operation, or as incorporated forms, if not incarcerated delinquents; but it is not their centre, end, or home. Even sight and reason might persuade me, that all the noble invisible powers, that operate on this lower world, do principally belong unto a higher; and what can earth add to their essence, dignity, or perfection?

But why, O my soul, art thou so vainly solicitous to have formal, clear, distinct conceptions of the celestial world, and the individuation and operations of separated souls, any more than of the angels? While thou art the formal principle of an animated body, thy conceptions must be suitable to their present state and use. When thou art possessed of a better state, thou shalt know it as a possessor ought to do; for such a knowledge as thou lookest after is part of the possession, and to long to know and love, in clearness and perfection, is to long to possess. It is thy Savior, and his glorified ones, that are comprehensors and possessors; and it is his knowledge which must now be most of thy satisfaction. To seek his prerogative to thyself, is vain, usurping arrogance. Wouldest

thou be a God and Savior to thyself? O, consider how much of the fall is in this selfish care and desire to be as God, in knowing that of good and evil which belongeth not to thee, but to God, to know. Thou knowest, past doubt, that there is a God of infinite perfection, who is the rewarder of them that diligently seek him. Labor more to know thy duty to this God, and absolutely trust him, as to the particularities of thy felicity and reward. Thou didst trust thy parents to provide thee food and raiment, when thou didst but dutifully obey them; though they could have forsaken thee, or killed thee every hour, thou didst never fear it. Thou hast trusted physicians to give thee even ungrateful medicines, without inquiring after every ingredient, or fearing lest they should willfully give thee poison. I trust a barber with my throat: I trust a boatman or shipmaster with my life; yea, my horse, that might cast me; because I have no reason to distrust them, saving their insufficiency and uncertainty as creatures. If a pilot undertake to bring thee to the Indies, thou canst trust his conduct, though thou know thyself neither the ship, nor how to govern it; neither the way nor the place to which thou art conveyed. And must not thy God and Savior be trusted to bring thee safe to heaven, unless he will satisfy all thy inquiries of the individuation and operation of spirits? Leave unsearchable and useless questions to him that can easily resolve them, and to those to whom the knowledge of them doth belong. Thou dost but entangle thyself in sin and self-vexation, while thou wouldest take God's work upon thee, and wouldest know that for thyself which he must know for thee. Thy knowledge and care for it did not precede, nor prepare for, thy generation, nor for the motion of one pulse or breath, or for the concoction of one bit of all thy food, or the continuance of thy life one hour; supposing but thy care to use the means which God appointed thee, and to avoid things hurtful, and to beg his blessing. The command of being careful for nothing, and casting all thy care on God, who careth for us, obligeth us in all things that are God's part; and for our souls as well as for our bodies; yea, to trust him with the greatest of our concerns is our greatest duty; supposing we be careful about our own part, viz. to use the means, and obey his precepts. To dispose of a departing soul is God's part, and not ours: O, how much evil is in this distrustful, self-providing care! If I did but know what I would know about my soul and myself; and if I might but choose what condition it should be in, and be the final disposer of it myself, O, what satisfaction and joy would it afford me! And is not this to be partly a god to myself? Is he not fitter to know, and choose, and dispose of me than I am? I could trust myself easily, even my wit and will, in such a choice, if I had but power; and cannot I trust God and my Redeemer,

without all this care, and fear, and trouble, and all these particular inquiries? If you are conveying your child in a boat, or coach, by water, or by land, and he at every turn be crying out, 'O father, whither do we go?' or, 'What shall I do?' or, 'I shall be drowned, or fall:'—is it not rather his trust in you, than the particular satisfaction of his ignorant doubts, that must quiet and silence him? Be not, then, foolishly distrustful and inquisitive. Make not thyself thy own disquieter or tormentor, by an inordinate care of thy own security. Be not cast down, O departing soul, nor, by unbelief, disquieted within me. Trust in God, for thou shalt quickly, by experience, be taught to give him thanks and praise, who is the health of my countenance, and my God.

O, what clear reason, what great experience, do command me to trust him, absolutely and implicitly to trust him, and to distrust myself!

1. He is essential, infinite, perfection, power, wisdom, and love. There is in him all that should invite and encourage rational trust, and nothing that should discourage it.

2. There is nothing in any creature to be trusted but God in that creature, or God working in and by it. Distrust him, and there is nothing to be trusted; not the earth to bear me, nor the air to breath in, much less any mutable friend.

3. I am altogether his own, his own by right, and his own by devotion and consent. And shall I not trust him with his own?

4. He is the great Benefactor of all the world, that giveth all good to every creature, not by constraint, or by commutation, but as freely as the sun giveth forth its light. And shall we not trust the sun to shine?

5. He is my Father and special Benefactor, and hath taken me into his family as his child. And shall I not trust my heavenly Father?

6. He hath given me his Son, as the great pledge of his love; and what, then, will he think too dear for me? Will he not with him give me all things? Rom. viii. 32.

7. His Son came purposely to reveal the Father's unspeakable love, and purposely to save us. And shall I not trust him that hath proclaimed his love and reconciliation by such a messenger from heaven?

8. He hath given me the Spirit of his Son, even the spirit of adoption, which is the surest character of his child, the witness, pledge and earnest of heaven, the name and mark of God upon me, holiness to the Lord. And yet shall I not believe his love, and trust him?

9. He hath made me a member of his Son, and so far already united me to him. And will he not take care of the members of

his Son? Will he lose those that are given him? Is not Christ to be trusted with his members?

10. I am his interest, and the interest of his Son. Freely beloved; dearly bought; for whom so much is suffered and done, that he is pleased to call us his peculiar treasure. And may I not trust him with his dear-bought treasure?

11. He hath stated me in a relation to angels, who rejoiced at my repentance, and to the heavenly society, which shall not miss the smallest part. Angels shall not lose their joy, nor ministration.

12. He is in covenant with me; even the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. He hath given me many great and precious promises; and shall I fear lest he will break his word or covenant?

13. My Savior is the forerunner, entered into the holiest, and there appearing and interceding for me. And this after he had conquered death, and risen again to assure me of a future life, and ascended into heaven, to show us whither we must ascend; and that after these comfortable words, "Say to my brethren, I ascend to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God." John xx. 17. And shall I not follow him through death, and trust such a Guide and Captain of my salvation?

14. He is there to prepare a place for me, and will take me to himself. And may I not confidently expect it?

15. He told a malefactor on the cross, that he should be that day with him in paradise, to tell believing sinners what they may expect.

16. The church, by the article of his descent into hell, hath signified their common belief that his separated soul had its subsistence and operation, and did not sleep or perish, to tell us the immortality of separated souls.

17. His apostles, and other servants, have on earth served him with all these expectations.

18. The spirits of the perfected just are now in possession of what I hope for. And I am a follower of them who, by faith and patience, have attained the promised felicity. And may I not trust him to save me, who hath already saved millions in this way, when I could trust a ferryman to pass me over a river, that had safely passed over thousands before me? or I could trust a physician who cureth all that he undertaketh of the same disease.

19. I must be at his disposal, whether I will or not. I shall live while he will, and die when he will, and go whither he will. I may sin, and vex my soul with fears, and cares, and sorrows; but I shall never prevail against his will.

20. Therefore, there is no rest for souls but in the will of God.

That will created us, and that will did govern us, and that will shall be fulfilled on us. It was our efficient and our regent cause, and it shall be our end. Where else is it that we should rest? In the will of men, or angels, or in our own wills? All creatures are but creatures, and our own wills have undone us: they have misgoverned us, and they are our greatest enemies; our disease, our prison, and our death, till they are brought over to the will of God. Till then they are like a foot out of joint; like a child or subject in rebellion. There is no rectitude or health, no order, no peace or true felicity, but in the conformity of our wills to the will of God. And shall I die in distrustful striving against his will, and desiring to keep up my own before it?

21. What abundant experience have I had of God's fidelity and love! And after all this shall I not trust him? His undeserved mercy gave me being; it chose my parents; it gave them a tender love to me, and desire of my good; it taught them to instruct me early in his word, and to educate me in his fear; it chose me suitable company and habitation; it gave me betimes a teachable ingeny; it chose my schoolmasters; it brought to my hands many excellent and suitable books; it gave me some profitable public teachers; it placed me in the best of lands on earth, and I think in the best of ages which that land had seen; it did early destroy all great expectations and desires of the world, teaching me to bear the yoke from my youth, and causing me rather to groan under my infirmities, than to fight with strong and potent lusts; it chastened me betimes, but did not destroy me. Great mercy hath trained me up all my days, since I was nineteen years of age, in the school of affliction, to keep my sluggish soul awake in the constant expectations of my change, and to kill my pride and overvaluing of this world, and to lead all my studies to the most necessary things, and as a spur to excite my soul to seriousness, and especially to save me from the supine neglect and loss of time. Oh! what unspeakable mercy hath a life of constant but gentle chastisement proved to me! It urged me, against all dull delays, to make my calling and election sure, and to make ready my accounts, as one that must quickly give them up to God. The face of death, and nearness of eternity, did much convince me what books to read, what studies to prefer and prosecute, what company and conversation to choose. It drove me early into the vineyard of the Lord, and taught me to preach as a dying man to dying men. It was divine love and mercy which made sacred truth so pleasant to me, that my life hath been (under all my infirmities) almost a constant recreation and delight, in its discoveries, contemplation and practical use: how happy a teacher have I had! What excellent help and sweet illumination! How far beyond my expectation hath

divine mercy encouraged me in his sacred work ! How congruously did he choose every place of my ministration and habitation to this day, without my own forecast or seeking ! When, and where, since he first sent me forth, did I labor in vain ? How many are gone to heaven ; and how many are in the way, to whom he hath blessed the word, which, in weakness, I did, by his grace and providence, deliver ! Many good Christians are glad of now and then an hour's time to meditate on God's word, and recreate themselves in his holy worship ; but God hath allowed and called me to make it the constant business of my life. My library hath offered me both profitable and pleasant company and help, at all times, whenever I would use them. I have dwelt among the shining lights which the learned, wise and holy men of all ages have set up, and left to illuminate the world. How many comfortable hours have I had in the society of living saints, and in the love of faithful friends ! How many joyful days have I had in the solemn assemblies, where God hath been worshiped in seriousness and alacrity, by concordant (though imperfect) saints ; where the spirit of Christ hath manifested his presence, by helping myself and my brethren in speaking, and the people in ready, delightful hearing, and all of us in loving and gladly receiving his doctrine, covenant, and laws ! How unworthy was such a sinful worm as I, (who never had any academical helps, nor much from the mouth of any teacher,) that books should become so great a blessing to me, and that, quite beyond my own intentions, God should induce or constrain me to provide any such like helps for others ! How unworthy was I to be kept from the multiplied snares of sects and errors which reigned in this age, and to be used as a means for other men's preservation and reduction ; and to be kept in a love of unity and peace ! How unworthy was I that God should make known to me so much of his reconciling truth, while extremes did round about prevail, and were commended to the churches by the advantage of piety on one side, and of worldly prosperity and power on the other ; and that God should use me above forty years in so comfortable a work as to plead and write for love, peace, and concord, and to vouchsafe me so much success therein as he hath done, notwithstanding the general prevalency of the contentious military tribe ! Mercy I have had in peace, and liberty in times of violence ; and mercy I have had in wars, living two years in safety in a city of defense, in the very midst of the land, (Coventry,) and seeing no enemy while the kingdom was in wars and flames ; and only hearing of the common calamities round about ; and when I went abroad and saw the effects of human folly and fury, and of God's displeasure, he mercifully kept me from hurting any one, and being hurt by any. How many a time hath he preserved me, by day and night,

in difficulties and dangers, from the malice of Satan, and from the wrath of man, and from accidents which threaten sudden death ! While I beheld the ruins of towns and countries, and the fields covered with the carcasses of the slain, I was preserved, and returned home in peace. And O, how great was the mercy he showed me, in a teachable, tractable, peaceable, humble, unanimous people ! So many in number and so exemplary in quality ; who to this day keep their integrity and concord, when violence hath separated me from them above thirty years : yea, the like mercy of acceptance and success beyond my expectation, he hath showed me every where : I have had opportunity of free ministration ; even where there were many adversaries I have had an open door ; in the midst of human wrath and rage he hath preserved my liberty beyond expectation, and continued my acceptance and success. When I might not speak by voice to any single congregation, he enabled me to speak by writing to many ; and for the success of my plainest and popular writings, which cost me least, I can never be sufficiently thankful ; some of which he sent to preach abroad, in other languages, in foreign lands. When my mouth, with eighteen hundred or two thousand more, had been many years stopped, he hath since opened them in some degree ; and the sufferings intended us by men have been partly put by, and partly much alleviated, by his providence ; and the hardness of our terms hath not so much hindered the success of faithful labors as we feared, and as others hoped it would have done. I have had the comfort of seeing some peace and concord, and prosperity of truth and piety, kept up, under the utmost opposition of diabolical and human power, policy, and wrath. When I have been sent to the common jail for my services and obedience to him, he hath there kept me in peace, and soon delivered me. He hath made the mouths of my greatest enemies, who have studied my defamation and my ruin, to become my witnesses and compurgators, and to cross their own designs. How wonderful is it that I should so long dwell in so much peace, in the midst of those that seemed to want neither power nor skill, and much less will, to tread me down into contempt and misery ! And O, how many a danger, fear and pain hath he delivered this frail and languishing body from ! How oft hath he succored me, when flesh, and heart, and art have failed ! He hath cured my consuming coughs, and, many a time, stayed my flowing blood : he hath eased my pained limbs, and supported a weary, macerated skeleton : he hath fetched me up from the jaws of death, and reversed the sentence which men have passed on me. How many thousand weary days have been sweetened with his pleasant work ; and how many thousand painful, weary nights have had a comfortable morning ! How many thousand strong and

healthy persons have been taken away by death, whilst I have been upheld under all this weakness ! Many a time have I cried to the Lord in my trouble, and he hath delivered me out of my distress. I have had fifty years added to my days since I would have been full glad of Hezekiah's promise of fifteen. Since the day that I first preached his gospel, I expected not, of long time, to live above a year ; and I have lived since then fifty years. When my own prayers were cold and unbelieving, how many hundreds have prayed for me ! And what strange deliverances, encouraging fasting and prayer, have I oft had, upon their importunate requests ! My friends have been faithful, and the few that proved unfaithful have profitably taught me to place no confidence in man, and not to be inordinately affected to any thing on earth ; for I was forsaken by none of them, but those few that I excessively valued and overloved. My relations have been comfortable to me, contrary to my deserts, and much beyond my expectations. My servants have been faithful : my neighbors have been kind : my enemies have been impotent, harmless, or profitable : my superiors have honored me by their respectful words ; and while they have afflicted me, as supposing me a *remora* to their designs, they have not destroyed but protected me. To my inferiors, God hath made me, in my low capacity, somewhat helpful. I have been protected in ordinary health and safety, when the raging pestilence came near my habitation, and consumed a hundred thousand citizens : my dwelling hath been safe when I have seen the glory of the land in flames, and after beheld the dismal ruins. When violence separated me from my too much beloved library, and drove me into a poor and smoky house, I never had more help of God, nor did more difficult work than there. What pleasant retirements and quietness in the country have been the fruits of persecuting wrath ! And I must not forget, when I had more public liberty, how he saved me and all my hearers, even by a wonder, from being buried in the ruins of the fabric where we were ; and others, from the calamities, scandal, and lamentations, which would else have followed ; and it is not a mercy to be extenuated, that when the tongues and pens of all sects among us, and of proud self-exalters, and of some worthy, pious, differing brethren, have been long and vehemently bent against me ; when my infamy hath been endeavored, by abundance of volumes, by the backbiting of angry dividers of all sorts, and by the calumniating accusations of some that were too high to be gainsayed, and would not endure me to answer them, and vindicate my innocency ; yet all these together were never able to fasten their accusations, and procure any common belief, nor to bring me under the designed contempt, much less to break my comforts, encouragements, or labors.

These, all these, and very many more than these, are my experiences of that wondrous mercy which hath measured my pilgrimage, and filled up my days. Never did God break his promise with me; never did he fail me, nor forsake me. Had I not provoked him by rash and willful sinning, how little interruption of my peace and comforts had I ever been likely to have had! And shall I now distrust him at the last? Shall I not trust, and quietly trust, that infinite wisdom, love, and power, whom I have so long trusted, and found so good?

Nature teacheth man to love best those animals that are tame and tractable; that trust us and love us; that will come to our hands, and love our company; that will be familiar with us, and follow us, be it horse or dog, beasts or birds; but those that are wild, and live in woods, and fly from the face of man, are taken to be the game and prey of any one that can catch and kill them. And shall my foolish soul thus wildly fly from the face of God? Shall his children be like the fearful hare, or like a guilty Cain, or like an unbelieving Sadducee, that either believeth not, or hopeth not for the forgiveness of sin, and the life everlasting? Doth not the spirit of adoption incline us to love our Father's presence, and to be loath to be long from home? To distrust all creatures, even thyself, is not unreasonable; but to distrust God hath no just excuse. Fly from sin, from Satan, from temptations, from the world, from sinful flesh and idol self; but fly not from him that is goodness, love and joy itself. Fear thine enemy, but trust thy Father. If thy heart be reconciled to him and his service, by the Spirit, he is certainly reconciled to thee through Christ; and if he be for thee, and justify and love thee, who shall be against thee, or condemn thee, or separate thee from his love? If thy unreconciled will do make thee doubt of his reconciliation, it is time to abhor and lay by thy enmity. Consent, and be sure that he consenteth. Be willing to be his, and in holiness to serve him, and to be united in joyful glory to him; and then be sure that he is willing to accept thee, and receive thee to that glory. O dark and sinful soul! how little dost thou know thy friend, thyself, or God, if thou canst more easily and quietly trust thy life, thy soul, and hopes, to the will of thy friend, or of thyself, if thou hadst power, than to the will of God! Every dog would be at home and with his master; much more every ingenuous child with his father; and though enemies distrust us, wife and children will not do so, while they believe us just. And hath God ever showed himself either unfaithful or unmerciful to me?

To thee, O Lord, as to a faithful Creator, I commit my soul; 1 Pet. iv. 19. I know that thou art the faithful God, who keepest covenant and mercy with them that love thee and keep thy com-

mandments; Deut. vii. 9. Thou art faithful who hast called me to the communion of thy Son Jesus Christ our Lord; 1 Cor. i. 9. Thy faithfulness hath saved me in and from temptation; (1 Cor. x. 13.) it hath stablished me, and kept me from prevailing evil; (2 Thess. iii. 3.) and it will keep my spirit, soul and body to the coming of Christ; 1 Thess. v. 23, 24. It is in faithfulness that thou hast afflicted me; (Psalm cxix. 75.) and shall I not trust thee, then, to save me? It is thy faithful word, that all thine elect shall obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory; and if we be dead with him, shall live with him; and if we suffer, we shall also reign with him; 2 Tim. ii. 11, 12.

To thee, O my Savior, I commit my soul: it is thine own by redemption: it is thine own by covenant: it is marked and sealed by thy Spirit as thine own, and thou hast promised not to lose it; John vi. 39. Thou wast made like us thy brethren, that thou mightest be a merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for our sins. By thy blood we have boldness to enter into the holiest, even by the new and living consecrated way. Cause me to draw near with a sincere heart, in full assurance of faith, by thee that art the High Priest over the house of God; for he is faithful that has promised life through thee; Heb. x. 20—23. Thy name is faithful and true; (Rev. xix. 11.) and faithful and true are all thy promises; Rev. xxii. 6. and xxi. 5. Thou hast promised rest to weary souls that come to thee; Matt. xi. 28. 2 Thess. i. 7. I am weary of suffering, and weary of sin; weary of my flesh, and weary of my darkness, and dullness, and distance, and of this wicked, blind, unrighteous, and confounded world: and whither should I look for rest but home to my heavenly Father, and to thee? I am but a bruised reed, but thou wilt not break me. I am but a smoking flax, but thou wilt not quench what thy grace hath kindled; but thou, in whose name the nations trust, wilt bring forth judgment unto victory; Matt. xii. 20, 21. The Lord redeemeth the souls of his servants, and none of them that trust in thee shall be desolate; Psalm xxxiv. 22. Therefore will I wait on thy name, for it is good, and will trust in the mercy of God forever; Psalm lii. 8, 9. The Lord is good, a strong hold in the day of trouble, and he knoweth them that trust in him; Nahum i. 7. Sinful fear is a snare; but he that putteth his trust in the Lord shall be set on high; Prov. xxix. 25. Blessed is the man that maketh the Lord his trust, and respecteth not the proud, and such as turn aside to lies; Psalm xl. 4. Thou art my hope, O Lord God, thou art my trust from my youth. By thee have I been holden up from the womb, and my praise shall be continually of thee. Cast me not off now in the time of age. Forsake me not when my strength faileth. O God, thou hast taught me

from my youth, and hitherto have I declared thy wondrous works. Now, also, when I am old and gray, O God, forsake me not; Psalm xvii. 5, 6. 9. 17, 18. Leave not my soul destitute; for mine eyes are toward thee, and my trust is in thee: Psalm xiv. 8. I had fainted, unless I had believed to see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living; even where they that live shall die no more. The sun may cease to shine on man, and the earth to bear us; but God will never cease to be love, nor to be faithful in his promises. Blessed be the Lord, who hath commanded me so safe and quieting a duty as to trust him, and cast all my cares on him, as on one that has promised to care for me!

II. And blessed be God, who hath made it my duty to hope for his salvation. Hope is the ease, yea, the life of our hearts, that else would break, yea, die within us: despair is no small part of hell: God cherisheth hope, as he is the lover of souls. Satan, our enemy, cherisheth despair, when his way of blind presumption faileth. As fear is a foretaste of evil, before it is felt, so hope doth anticipate and foretaste salvation, before it is possessed. It is then worldly hypocrites' hope that perisheth; for all that hope for true or durable happiness on the earth, in the pleasures of this perishing flesh, must needs be deceived. But happy is he who hath the God of Jacob for his help, whose hope is in the Lord his God, which made heaven and earth, which keepeth truth forever; Psalm cxlvi. 5, 6. Woe to me, were my hope only in the time and matters of this fleshly life; (1 Cor. xv. 19.) but the righteous hath hope in his death; (Prov. xiv. 32.) and hope maketh not ashamed; Rom. v. 5. Blessed is the man that trusteth in the Lord, whose hope the Lord is; Jer. xvii. 7. Lay hold, then, O my soul, upon the hope which is set before thee; (Heb. vi. 18.) it is thy firm and steadfast anchor; (ver. 19.) without it thou wilt be as a shipwrecked vessel. Thy foundation is sure; it is God himself: our faith and hope are both in God; 1 Pet. i. 21. It is Jesus our Lord, who is risen from the dead, and reigneth in glory, Lord of all; 1 Tim. i. 1. Yea, it is the Christ, who, by faith, doth dwell within us, who is our hope of glory; Eph. iii. 17. Col. i. 27. In this hope, which is better than the law that Moses gave, it is that we draw nigh to God; (Heb. vii. 19.) it is the Holy Ghost, that is both our evidence, and the efficient of our hope; Gal. v. 5. Rom. viii. 16, 23. By him we hope for that which we see not, and therefore wait in patience for it; (ver. 24, 25.) by hope are we saved. It is an encouraging grace which will make us stir, when as despair doth kill endeavors; it cureth sloth, and makes us diligent and constant to the end, and by this doth help us to full assurance; Heb. vi. 11, 12. It is a desiring grace, and would fain obtain the glory hoped for. It is a quieting and comforting grace;

Rom. xv. 4. The God of hope doth fill us with joy and peace in believing, that we may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost; ver. 13. Shake off despondency, O my soul, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God; Rom. v. 2. Believe in hope, though dying flesh would tell thee that it is against hope; Rom. iv. 18. God, that cannot lie, hath confirmed his covenant by his immutable oath, that we might have strong consolation who are fled for refuge to the hope which is set before us; Heb. vi. 18. What blessed preparations are made for our hope; and shall we now let the tempter shake it, or discourage it? The abundant mercy of God the Father hath begotten us again to a lively hope, by the resurrection of Christ, to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for us; 1 Pet. i. 3. Grace teacheth us to deny ungodliness, and worldly lusts, and to live soberly, righteously, and godly in this world, as looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God, and our Savior; Tit. ii. 12, 13. We are renewed by the Holy Ghost, and justified by grace, that we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life; Tit. iii. 6, 7. We are illuminated, that we may know the hope of Christ's calling, and what is the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints; Eph. i. 18, 19. The hope that is laid up for us in heaven, is the chief doctrine of the gospel, which bringeth light and immortality into clearer light; Col. i. 5. 2 Tim. i. 10. It is for this hope that we keep a conscience void of offense, and that God is served in the world; (Acts xxiv. 15, 16, and xxvi. 7.) wherefore, gird up the loins of thy mind; put on this helmet, the hope of salvation; (1 Thess. v. 8.) and let not death seem to thee as it doth to them that have no hope; 1 Thess. iv. 13. The love of our Father, and our Savior, have given us everlasting consolation, and good hope through grace, to comfort our hearts, and establish them in every good word and work; 2 Thess. ii. 16, 17. Keep, therefore, the rejoicing of hope firm to the end; Heb. iii. 6. Continue grounded and settled in the faith, and be not moved away from the hope of the gospel; Col. i. 23. 1 Pet. i. 13. And now, Lord, what wait I for? my hope is in thee; Psalm xxxix. 7. Uphold me according to thy word, that I may live; and let me not be ashamed of my hope; Psalm cxix. 116. Though mine iniquities testify against me, yet, O thou that art the hope of Israel, the Savior thereof in the time of trouble, be not as a stranger to my soul; Jer. xiv. 7, 8. Thy name is called upon by me; O forsake me not; ver. 9. Why have our eyes beheld thy wonders, and why have we had thy covenant, and thy mercies, but that we might set our hope in God? Psalm lxxviii. 5, 7. Remember the word to thy servant, upon which thou hast caused me to hope; Psalm cxix.

49. If thou, Lord, shouldest mark iniquity, O Lord, who should stand? But there is forgiveness with thee, that thou mayest be feared. I wait for the Lord; my soul doth wait, and in his word do I hope: I will hope in the Lord, for with him there is mercy and plenteous redemption; Psalm cxxx. 3—5. 7. For he taketh pleasure in them that fear him, in those that hope in his mercy; Psalm cxlvii. 11. Though flesh and heart fail, the Lord is the rock of my heart: he is my portion, saith my soul, therefore will I hope in him. The Lord is good to them that wait for him; to the soul that seeketh him. It is good that I should both hope, and quietly wait for the salvation of the Lord. It is good for me that I have borne the yoke in my youth, and that I keep silence, and put my mouth in the dust, as if so be there may be hope; Psalm lxxiii. 26. Lam. iii. 24—27. 29.

God need not flatter such worms as we, nor promise us that which he never meaneth to perform. He hath laid the rudiments of our hope, in a nature capable of desiring, seeking, and thinking of another life: he hath called me by grace to actual desires and endeavors; and some foretaste he hath vouchsafed. I look for no heaven, but the perfection of divine life, light, and love, in endless glory with Christ and his holy ones. And this he hath begun in me already; and shall I not boldly hope, when I have the capacity, the promise, and the earnest and foretaste? Is it not God himself that has caused me to hope? Was not nature, promise, and grace from him? And can a soul miscarry, and be deceived, that departeth hence in a hope of God's own causing, and encouraging? Lord, I have lived in hope, I have prayed in hope, I have labored, suffered, and waited in hope; and, by thy grace, I will die in hope. And is not this according to thy word and will? And wilt thou cast away a soul that hopeth in thee, by thine own command and operation? Had wealth and honor, or continuance on earth, or the favor of man, been my reward and hope, my hope and I had died together. Were this our best, how vain were man! But the Lord liveth, and my Redeemer is glorified, and intercedeth for me; and the same Spirit is in heaven, who is in my heart, (as the same sun is in the firmament which is in my house,) and the promise is sure to all Christ's seed. And millions are now in heaven, that once did live and die in hope; they were sinners once, as now I am; they had no other Savior, no other Sanctifier, no other promise than I now have; confessing that they were strangers here, they looked for a better country, and for a city that had foundations, even a heavenly, where now they are: and shall I not follow them in hope that have sped so well? Hope, then, O my soul, unto the end; 1 Pet. i. 13. From henceforth, and forever, hope in the Lord; Psalm cxxxi. 13. I will hope continually, and

will yet praise thee more and more ; my mouth shall show forth thy righteousness and salvation ; Psalm lxxi. 14, 15. The Lord is at my right hand ; I shall not be moved. My heart, therefore, is glad, and my glory rejoiceth ; my flesh also shall dwell confidently, and rest in hope ; for God hath showed me the path of life : in his presence is fullness of joy, and at his right hand are pleasures for evermore ; Psalm xvi. 8—11.

III. What then remaineth, O my soul, but that, in trust and hope, thou love thy God, thy Savior, thy Comforter, the glorious society, thy own perfection in glorious, endless, heavenly life, and light, and love, and the joyful praises of Jehovah, better than this burden of painful and corruptible flesh, and this howling wilderness, the habitation of serpents and untamed brutes, where unbelief and murmuring, lust and folly, injustice and uncharitableness, tyranny and divisions, pride and contention, have long provoked God, and wearied thee ! Where the vintage and harvest is thorns and thistles, sin and sorrows, cares and crosses, manured by manifold temptation. How odious is that darkness and unbelief, that unholiness and disaffection, that deadness and stupidity, which maketh such a work as this, so reasonable, necessary, and pleasant a work, to seem unsuitable or hard ? It is unsuitable or hard to the eye to see the sun and light ; or by it to see the beautiful world ? or for a man to love his life or health, his father, or his friend ? What should be easier to a nature that hath rational love, than to love him that is essential love itself ? He that loveth all, and giveth to all the loving faculty, should be loved by all ; and he that hath specially loved me, should be specially loved by me.

Love is the perfection of all thy preparations. It desireth to please God, and therefore to be in the most pleasing state, and freed from all that is displeasing to him, which is not to be hoped for on earth. It desireth all suitable nearness, acquaintance, union, and communion. It is weary of distance, estrangedness, and alien society and affairs. It taketh advantage of every notice, intimation, or mention of God, to renew and exercise these desires. Every message and mercy from him is fuel for love, and, while we are short of perfection, stir up our desires after more. When love tasteth of the grapes, it would have the vine. When it tasteth of the fruits, it would dwell where they grow, and possess the land. Its thoughts of proximity and fruition are sweet ; no other person or thing can satisfy it. The soul is where it loveth. If our friend dwell in our hearts by love, and if fleshly pleasure, riches, and honor, do dwell in the heart of the voluptuous, the covetous, and the proud, surely God and our Redeemer, the heavenly society, holiness, and glory, do dwell in the heart which loveth them with a fervent love. And if heaven dwell in my heart, shall I not

desire to dwell in heaven? Light and light, fire and fire, are not more inclined to union than love and love; gracious love and glorious love. Would divine, original, universal love communicate and pour out itself more plentifully upon my heart, how easy would it be to leave this flesh and world, and to hear the sentence of my departure to my God! Death and the grave would be but a triumph for victorious love. It would be easier to die in peace and joy, than to rest at night, or to come home from my travel to my beloved friends, or to go, when I am hungry, to a feast. A little love hath made me study willingly, and preach willingly, and write willingly, yea, and suffer somewhat willingly; and would not more make me go more willingly to God? Shall the imagination of house, gardens, walks, libraries, prospects, meadows, orchards, hills, and rivers, allure the desires of deceived minds? And shall not the thoughts of the heavenly mansions, society, and delights, much more allure and draw up my desires? The reading of a known fiction of a *Civitas Solis*, an *Utopia*, an *Atalantis*, &c., hath pleased many; but if I did believingly hear of such a country in the world, where men did never die, nor were sick, or weak, or sad; where the prince was perfectly just and pious, wise and peaceable, devoted to God and the public good; and the teachers were all wise, judicious men, of universal certain knowledge, perfectly acquainted with the matter and method of natural and theological truths, and all their duty, and all of one mind, and of one heart, and tongue and practice, loving each other, and the people as themselves, and leading the flocks heavenward, through all temptations, with triumphant hopes and joy; where all the people perfectly obeyed God, their commanders, and their teachers, and lived in perfect love, unity, and peace, and were daily employed in the joyful praises of God, and hopes of glory, and in doing all possible good to one another, contending with none through ignorance, uncharitableness, or pride, nor ever reproaching, injuring, or hurting one another, &c. I say, if I knew or heard of such a country, should I not love it before I ever see it, and earnestly desire to be there? Nay, do I over-love this distracted world, where tyranny sheddeth streams of blood, and layeth desolate cities and countries, and exposeth the miserable inhabitants to lamentable distress and famine; where the same tyranny sets up the wicked, reproacheth and oppresseth the just and innocent, keepeth out the gospel, and keepeth up idolatry, infidelity, and wickedness, in the far greatest part of all the earth; where Satan chooseth pastors too often for the churches of Christ, even such as by ignorance, pride, sensuality, worldliness, and malignity, become thorns and thistles, yea, devouring wolves, to those whom they should feed and comfort; where no two persons are in all things of a mind; where evil

is commended, and truth and goodness accused and oppressed, because men's minds are unacquainted with them, or unsuitable to them. And those that are the greatest pretenders to truth do most eagerly contend against it, and oppose it; and almost all the world are scolding or scuffling in the dark; and where there appeareth but little hopes of a remedy,—I say, can I love such a world as this? And shall I not think more delightfully of the inheritance of the saints in light, and the uniting love and joyful praises of the church triumphant, and the heavenly choir?

Should I not love a lovely and a loving world much better than a world where there is, comparatively, so little loveliness or love? All that is of God is good and lovely; but it is not here that his glory shineth in felicitating splendor. I am taught to look upward when I pray, and to say, "Our Father, which art in heaven." God's works are amiable, even in hell; and yet, though I would know them, I would not be there. And, alas! how much of the works of man are mixed here with the works of God! Here is God's wisdom manifest; but here is man's obstinate folly. Here is God's government; but here is man's tyranny and unruliness. Here is God's love and mercies; but here are men's malice, wrath and cruelty; by which they are worse to one another than wolves and tigers, depopulating countries, and filling the world with bloodshed, famine, misery, and lamentations; proud tyrants being worse than raging plagues, which made David choose the pestilence before his enemies' pursuit. Here is much of God's beauteous order and harmony; but here is also much of man's madness, deformity, and confusion. Here is much historical truth, and some ecclesiastical justice; but, alas! with how much odious falsehood and injustice is it mixed? Here is much precious theological verity; but how dark is much of it to such blind, and negligent, and corrupted minds as every where abound! Here are wise, judicious teachers and companions to be found; but, alas! how few, in comparison of the most; and how hardly known by those that need them! Here are sound and orthodox ministers of Christ; but how few that most need them know which are they, and how to value them or use them! And how many thousands of seduced or sensual sinners are made to believe that they are but deceivers, or, as they called Paul, pestilent fellows, and movers of sedition among the people! And in how many parts of the world are they as the prophets that Obadiah hid in caves, or as Micaiah, or Elias among the lying prophets, or the Baalites! though such as of whom the world is not worthy. And is that world, then, more worthy of our love than heaven? There are worthy and religious families which honor God, and are honored by him; but, alas! how few! and usually by the temptations of wealth, and worldly

interest, how full even of the sins of Sodom, pride, fullness of bread, and abundance of idleness, if not also unmercifulness to the poor! And how are they tempted to plead for their sins and snares, and account it rustic ignorance which contradicteth them! And how few pious families are there of the greater sort, that do not quickly degenerate; and posterity, by false religion, error or sensuality, grow most contrary to the minds of their pious progenitors. There are many that educate their children wisely in the fear of God, and have, accordingly, comfort in them; but how many are there, that, having devoted them in baptism to God, do train them up in the service of the flesh, the world and the devil, which they renounced, and never understood, or at least intended, for themselves or children, what they did profess! How many parents think that when they offer their children to God in baptism, without a sober and due consideration of the nature and meaning of that great covenant with God, that God must accept and certainly regenerate and save them! Yea, too many religious parents forget that they themselves are sponsors in that covenant, and undertake to use the means, on their part, to make their children fit for the grace of the Son, and the communion of the Spirit, as they grow up, and think that God should absolutely sanctify, keep, and save them at age, because they are theirs, and were baptized, though they keep them not from great and unnecessary temptations, nor teach them plainly and seriously the meaning of the covenant which was made for them with God, as to the nature, benefits or conditions of it. How many send them to others to be taught in grammar, logic, philosophy, or arts, yea, and divinity, before their own parents ever taught them what they did with God in baptism, what they received, and what they promised and vowed to do! They send them to trades, or secular callings, or to travel in foreign lands, among a multitude of snares, among tempting company, and tempting baits, before ever at home they were instructed, armed, and settled against those temptations which they must needs encounter, and which, if they overcome them, they are undone. How ordinarily, when they have first neglected this great duty of their own, for their fortification, do they plead a necessity of thrusting them out on these temptations, though utterly unarmed, from some punctilio of honor, or conformity to the world, to avoid the contempt of worldly men, or to adorn their (yet naked) souls with some of the plumes or painted trifles, ceremonies, or compliments, which will never serve instead of heavenly wisdom, mortification, and the love of God and man! As if they were like to learn that fear of God in a crowd of diverting and tempting company, baits, and business, which they never learned under the teaching, nurture, and daily oversight, of their religious

parents, in a safer station ; or as if, for some little reason, they might send them as to sea without pilot or anchor, and think that God must save them from the waves ; or as if it were better to enter them into Satan's school, or army, and venture them upon the notorious danger of damnation, than to miss of preferment and wealth, or of the fashions and favor of the times ; and then when they hear that they have forsaken God, and true religion, and given up themselves to lust and sensuality, and, perhaps, as enemies to God and good men, destroy, what their parents labored to build up, these parents wonder at God's judgments, and with broken hearts lament their infelicity, when it were better to lament their own misdoing, and it had been best of all to have lamented it.

Thus families, churches, and kingdoms, run on to blindness, ungodliness, and confusion : self-undoing, and serving the malice of Satan for fleshly lust, is the too common employment of mankind : all is wise, and good, and sweet, which is prescribed us by God, in true nature, or supernatural revelation ; but folly, sin, and misery, mistaking themselves to be wit, and honesty, and prosperity, and raging against that which nominally they pretend to and profess, are the ordinary case and course of the most of men ; and when we would plead them out of their deceit and misery, it is well if we are not tempted to imitate them, or be not partly infected with their disease, or at least reproached and oppressed as their enemies : such a Bedlam is most of the world become, where madness goeth for the only wisdom, and he is the bravest man that can sin and be damned with reputation and renown, and successfully drive or draw the greatest number with him unto hell ; to which the world hath no small likeness, forsaking God, and being very much forsaken by him.

This is the world which standeth in competition for my love, with the spiritual, blessed world : much of God's mercies and comforts I have here had ; but their sweetness was their taste of divine love, and their tendency to heavenly perfection. What was the end and use of all the good that ever I saw, or that ever God did for my soul or body, but to teach me to love him, and long for more ? How many weaning experiences ; how many thousand bitter or condemning thoughts have I had of all the glory and pleasures of this world ! How many thousand love tokens from God have called me to believe and taste his goodness ! Wherever I go, and which way soever I look, I see vanity and vexation written upon all things in this world, so far as they stand in competition with God, and would be the end and portion of a fleshly mind ; and I see holiness to the Lord written upon every thing in this world, so far as it declareth God and leadeth me to him, as my ultimate end. God hath not for nothing engaged me in war

against this world, and commanded me to take and use it as mine enemy: the emptiness, dangerousness, and bitterness of the world, and the all-sufficiency, trustiness, and goodness of God, have been the sum of all the experiences of my life. And shall a worldly, backward heart overcome the teaching of nature, Scripture, the Spirit of grace, and all experience? Far be it from me!

But, O my God! love is thy great and special gift: all good is from thee: but love is the godlike nature, life, and image: it is given us from the love of the Father, the grace of the Son, and the quickening, illuminating, and sanctifying operation of the Holy Spirit: what can the earth return unto the sun, but its own reflected beams,—if those? As, how far soever man is a medium in generation, nature, and that appetite which is the moving *pondus* in the child, is thy work; so whatever is man's part in the immediate work of believing and repenting, (which yet is not done without thy Spirit and grace,) certainly it is the blessed Regenerator, which must make us new creatures, by giving us thy divine nature, holy love, which is the holy appetite and *pondus* of the soul. Come down, Lord, into this heart, for it cannot come up to thee. Can the plants for life, or the eye for light, go up unto the sun? Dwell in me by the Spirit of love, and I shall dwell by love in thee. Reason is weak, and thoughts are various, and man will be a slippery, uncertain wight, if love be not his fixing principle, and do not incline his soul to thee: surely through thy grace I easily feel that I love thy word, I love thy image, I love thy work, and, O, how heartily do I love to love thee, and long to know and love thee more! And if all things be of thee, and through thee, and to thee, surely this love to the beams of thy glory here on earth is eminently so! It is thee, Lord, that it meaneth: to thee it looketh: it is thee it serveth: for thee it mourns, and seeks, and groans: in thee it trusts; and the hope, and peace, and comfort which support me, are in thee. When I was a returning prodigal in rags, thou sawest me afar off, and didst meet me with thy embracing, feasting love; and shall I doubt whether he that hath better clothed me, and dwelt within me, will entertain me with a feast of greater love in the heavenly mansions, the world of love?

The suitableness of things below to my fleshly nature, hath detained my affections too much on earth; and shall not the suitableness of things above to my spiritual nature much more draw up my love to heaven? There is the God whom I have sought and served: he is also here; but veiled, and but little known: but there he shineth to heavenly spirits in heavenly glory. There is the Savior in whom I have believed: he hath also dwelt in flesh on earth; but clothed in such meanness, and humbled to such a life and death, as was to the Jews a stumbling-block, and to the

Gentiles matter of reproach: but he shineth and reigneth now in glory, above the malice and contempt of sinners. And I shall there live because he liveth; and in his light I shall have light. He loved me here with a redeeming, regenerating, and preserving love: but there he will love me with a perfecting, glorifying, joyful love. I had here some rays of heavenly light: but interpositions caused eclipses and nights, yea, some long and winter nights: but there I shall dwell in the city of the sun, the city of God, the heavenly Jerusalem, where there is no night, eclipse, or darkness: there are the heavenly hosts, whose holy love, and joyful praises, I would fain be a partaker of! I have here had some of their loving assistance, but to me unseen, being above our fleshly way of converse; but there I shall be with them, of the like nature, in the same orb, and of the same triumphant church and choir! There are perfected souls gathered home to Christ: not, as here, striving, like Esau and Jacob in the womb; nor yet as John when he leaped in the womb, because of his mother's joy; nor as wrangling children, that are hardly kept in the same house in peace: not like the servants of Abraham and Lot, like Paul and Barnabas, like Epiphanius and Chrysostom, like Luther and Carolostadius, like Ridley and Hooper, or the many striving parties now among us; nor like the disciples striving who should be the greatest: not like Noah's family in a wicked world, or Lot in a wicked city, or Abraham in an idolatrous land; nor like Elijah left alone; nor like those that wandered in sheep-skins and goat-skins, destitute, afflicted, and tormented, hid in dens and caves of the earth: not like Job on the dunghill; nor like Lazarus at the rich man's door: not like the African bishops, whose tongues were cut out; nor like the preachers silenced by Popish imposers; (in Germany by the interim, or elsewhere;) nor like such as Tzedegine, Peucer, and many other worthy men, whose maturest age was spent in prisons: not as we poor bewildered sinners, feeling evil, and fearing more, confounded in folly and mad contention, some hating the only way of peace, and others groping for it in the dark, wandering and lost in the clearest light, where the illuminated can but pity the blind, but cannot make them willing to be delivered. What is heaven to me, but God? God, who is life, and light, and love, communicating himself to blessed spirits, perfecting them in the reception, possession, and exercise of life, and light, and love, forever. These are not the accidents, but the essence of that God who is heaven and all to me. Should I fear that death which passeth me to infinite, essential life? Should I fear a darksome passage into a world of perfect light? Should I fear to go to love itself? Think, O my soul, what the sun's quickening light and heat is to this lower, corporeal world? Much

more is God, even infinite life, and light, and love, to the blessed world above. Doth it not draw out thy desires to think of going into a world of love? When love will be our region, our company, our life; more to us than the air is for our breath, than the light is for our sight, than our food is for our life, than our friends are for our solace; and more to us than we are to ourselves. O excellent grace of faith which doth foresee, and blessed word of faith that doth foreshow, this world of love! Shall I fear to enter where there is no wrath, no fear, no strangeness, nor suspicion, nor selfish separation, but love will make every holy spirit as dear and lovely to me as myself, and me to them as lovely as themselves, and God to us all more amiable than ourselves and all; where love will have no defects or distances, no damps or discouragements, no discontinuance or mixed disaffection; but as life will be without death, and light without darkness, (a perfect, everlasting day of glory,) so will love be without any hatred, unkindness, or allay. As many coals make one fire, and many candles conjoined make one light, so will many living spirits make one life, and many illuminated, glorious spirits, one light and glory, and many spirits, naturalized into love, will make one perfect love of God, and be loved as one by God forever; for all the body of Christ is one; even here it is one in initial union of the Spirit, and relation to one God, and Head, and Life, (1 Cor. xii. throughout; Eph. iv. 1—17.) and shall be presented as beloved and spotless to God, when the great marriage day of the Lamb shall come; Eph. v. 24, 25, &c. Rev. lxxi. and xxii.

Hadst thou not given me, O Lord, the life of nature, I should have had no conceptions of a glorious, everlasting life: but if thou give me not the life of grace, I shall have no sufficient delightful inclination and desire after it. Hadst thou not given me sight and reason, the light of nature, I should not have thought how desirable it is to live in the glorious light and vision; but if thou give me not the spiritual illumination of a seeing faith, I shall not yet long for the glorious light, and beatific vision. Hadst thou not given me a will and love, which is part of my very nature itself, I could not have tasted how desirable it is to live in a world of universal, perfect, endless love: but unless thou also shed abroad thy love upon my heart, by the Spirit of Jesus, the great medium of love, and turn my very nature or inclination into divine and holy love, I shall not long for the world of love. Appetite followeth nature: O! give me not only the image and the art of godliness; the approaches towards it, nor only some forced or unconstant acts; but give me the divine nature, which is holy love, and then my soul will hasten towards thee, and cry, 'How long, O Lord, how long! O come, come quickly, make no delay.'

Surely the fear of dying intimateth some contrary love that inclineth the soul another way ; and some shameful unbelief, and great unapprehensiveness of the attractive glory of the world of love ; otherwise no frozen person so longeth for the fire, none in a dungeon so desireth light, as we should long for the heavenly light and love.

God's infinite, essential self-love, in which he is eternally delighted in himself, is the most amiable object, and heaven itself to saints and angels ; and next to that his love to all his works, to the world, and to the church in heaven, speaketh much more of his loveliness than his love to me. But yet due self-love in me is his work, and part of his natural image ; and when this by sin is grown up to excess, (through the withdrawing of a contracted, narrow soul, from the union and due love to my fellow-creatures, and to God,) I must also, I cannot but, inquire after God's love to me ; and by this my desires must be moved ; for I am not so capable of ascending above self-interest, and self-love, as in the state of glorious union I shall be. I am glad to perceive that others do love God ; and I love those most that I find most love him ; but it is not other men's love to God that will be accepted by him instead of mine ; nor is it God's love to others (which yet rejoiceth me) that will satisfy me, without his love to me. But when all these are still before me, God's essential self-love and delight, his love to his creatures, especially the glorified, and his love to me also, even to me, a vile, unworthy sinner ; what, then, should stay my ascending love, or discourage my desires to be with God ?

And dost thou doubt, canst thou doubt, O my soul, whether thou art going to a God that loveth thee ? If the Jews discerned the great love of Christ to Lazarus by his tears, canst thou not discern his love to thee in his blood ? It is, nevertheless, but the more obliging and amiable that it was not shed for thee alone, but for many. May I not say as Paul, (Gal. ii. 20.) " I live by the faith of the Son of God, that hath loved me, and given himself for me." Yea, it is not so much I that live, as Christ liveth in me ; and will he forsake the habitation which his love hath chosen, and which he hath so dearly bought ? O, read often that triumphing chapter, Rom. viii., and conclude, " What shall separate us from the love of God ? " If life have not done it, death shall not do it. If leaning on his breast at meat was a token of Christ's special love to John, is not his dwelling in me by my faith, and his living in me by his Spirit, a sure token of his love to me ? And if a dark saying, " If he tarry till I come, what is that to thee ? " raised a report that the beloved disciple should not die, why should not plain promises assure me that I shall live with him that loveth

me forever? Be not so unthankful, O my soul, as to question, doubtingly, whether thy heavenly Father, and thy Lord, doth love thee. Canst thou forget the sealed testimonies of it? Did I not even now repeat so many as should shame my doubts? A multitude of thy friends have loved thee so entirely, that thou canst not doubt of it; and did any of them signify their love with the convincing evidence that God hath done? Have they done for thee what he hath done? Are they love itself? Is their love so full, so firm, and so unchangeable, as his? My thoughts of heaven are the sweeter, because abundance of my ancient, lovely, and loving holy friends are there; and I am the willing, by death, to follow them. And should I not think of it more pleas- edly because my God and Father, my Savior, and my Comforter, is there? And not alone, but with all the society of love. Was not Lazarus in the bosom of God himself? Yet it is said that he was in Abraham's bosom; as the promise runs, that we shall sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of God. And what maketh the society of the saints so sweet as holy love? It is comfortable to read, that "to love the Lord our God with all our heart, and soul, and might," is the first and great command- ment; and the second is like to it, "to love our neighbor as our- selves." For God's commands proceed from that will which is his nature, or essence, and they tend to the same as their objective end. Therefore, he that hath made love the great command, doth tell us that love is the great conception of his own essence, the spring of that command; and that this commanded, imperfect love doth tend to perfect, heavenly love, even to our communion with essential, infinite love. It were strange, that the love and goodness which is equal to the power that made the world, and the wisdom that ordereth it, should be scant and backward to do good, and to be suspected more than the love of friends! The re- membrance of the holiness, humility, love, and faithfulness, of my dearest friends of every rank, with whom I have conversed on earth, in every place where I have lived, is so sweet to me, that I am oft ready to recreate myself with the naming of such as are now with Christ. But in heaven they will love me better than they did on earth; and my love to them will be more pleasant. But all these sparks are little to the sun.

Every place that I have lived in was a place of divine love, which there set up its obliging monuments. Every year and hour of my life hath been a time of love; every friend, and every neigh- bor, yea, every enemy, have been the messengers and instruments of love; every state and change of my life, notwithstanding my sin, hath opened to me treasures and mysteries of love. And af- ter such a life of love, shall I doubt whether the same God do love

me? Is he the God of the mountains, and not of the valleys? Did he love me in my youth and health, and doth he not love me in my age, and pain, and sickness? Did he love all the faithful better in their life than at their death? If our hope be not chiefly in this life, neither is our state of love, which is principally the heavenly; endless grace. My groans grieve my friends, but abate not their love. Did he love me for my strength, my weakness might be my fear; as they that love for beauty loathe them that are deformed, and they that love for riches despise the poor. But God loved me when I was his enemy, to make me a friend, and when I was bad, to make me better. Whatever he taketh pleasure in is his own gift. Who made me to differ? And what have I that I have not received? And God will finish the work, the building, the warfare, that is his own. O, the multitude of mercies to my soul and body, in peace and war, in youth and age, to myself and friends, the many great and gracious deliverances which have testified to me the love of God! Have I lived in the experience of it, and shall I die in the doubts of it? Had it been love only to my body, it would have died with me, and not have accompanied my departing soul. I am not much in doubt of the truth of my love to him; though I have not seen him, save as in a glass, as in a glass seen I love him. I love my brethren whom I have seen, and those most that are most in love with him. I love his word, and works, and ways, and fain I would be nearer to him, and love him more; and I loath myself for loving him no better. And shall Peter say more confidently, "Thou knowest that I love thee," than "I know that thou lovest me?" Yes, he may; because, though God's love is greater and steadfaster than ours, yet our knowledge of his great love is less than his knowledge of our little love; and as we are defective in our own love, so are we in our certainty of its sincerity. And without the knowledge of our love to God, we can never be sure of his special love to us. But yet I am not utterly a stranger to myself; I know for what I have lived and labored in the world, and who it is that I have desired to please. The God whose I am, and whom I serve, hath loved me in my youth, and he will love me in my aged weakness. My flesh and my heart fail; my pains seem grievous to the flesh; but it is love that chooseth them, that useth them for my good, that moderateth them, and will shortly end them. Why, then, should I doubt of my Father's love? Shall pain or dying make me doubt? Did God love none from the beginning of the world but Enoch and Elias? And what am I better than my forefathers? What is in me that I should expect exemption from the common lot of mankind? Is not a competent time of great mercy on earth, in order to the unseen felicity, all that the best of men can hope for?

O for a clearer, stronger faith, to show me the world that more excelleth this, than this excelleth the womb where I was conceived ! Then should I not fear my third birth-day, what pangs soever go before it ; nor be unwilling of my change. The grave, indeed, is a bed that nature doth abhor, yet there the weary be at rest. But souls new born have a double nature that is immortal, and go to the place that is agreeable to their nature, even to the region of spirits, and the region of holy love. Even passive matter, that hath no other natural motion, hath a natural inclination to uniting, aggregative motion. And God maketh all natures suitable to their proper ends and use. How can it be that a spirit should not incline to be with spirits ? and souls that have the divine nature in holy love, desire to be with the God of love ? Arts, and sciences, and tongues, become not a nature to us ; else they would not cease at death. But holy love is our new nature, and, therefore, ceaseth not with this bodily life. And shall accidental love make me desire the company of a frail and mutable friend ? And shall not this engrafted, inseparable love make me long to be with Christ ? Though the love of God to all his creatures will not prove that they are all immortal, nor oblige them to expect another life, that never had capacity or faculties to expect it ; yet his love to such as in nature and grace are made capable of it, doth warrant and oblige them to believe and hope for the full perfection of the work of love. Some comfort themselves in the love of St. Peter, as having the keys of heaven. And how many could I name that are now with Christ, who loved me so faithfully on earth, that, were I sure they had the keys and power of heaven, and were not changed in their love, I could put my departing soul into their hands, and die with joy ! And is it not better in the hand of my Redeemer, and the God of love, and Father of spirits ? Is any love comparable to his ; or any friend so boldly to be trusted ? I should take it for ungrateful unkindness in my friend to doubt of my love and trustiness, if I had given him all that he hath, and maintained him constantly by my kindness : but, O, how odious a thing is sin ! which, by destroying our love to God, doth make us unmeet to believe and sweetly perceive his love ; and by making us doubt of the love of God, and lose the pleasant relish of it, doth more increase our difficulty of loving him ! The title that the angel gave to Daniel, "A man greatly beloved of God," methinks should be enough to make one joyfully love and trust God, both in life and death. Will almighty love ever hurt me, or forsake me ? And have not all saints that title in their degrees ? What else signifieth their mark and name, Holiness to the Lord ? What is it but our separation to God, as his peculiar, beloved people ? And how are they separated but by mutual love, and our forsaking all

that alienateth, or is contrary? Let scorners deride us as self-flatterers, that believe they are God's darlings; and woe to the hypocrites that believe it on their false presumption! Without such belief or grounded hopes, I see not how any man can die in true peace. He that is no otherwise beloved than hypocrites and unbelievers, must have his portion with them. And he that is no otherwise beloved than as the ungodly, unholy, and unregenerate, shall not stand in judgment, nor see God, nor enter into his kingdom. Most upright souls are to blame for groundless doubting of God's love; but not for acknowledging it, rejoicing in it, and, in their doubts, being most solicitous to make it sure. Love brought me into the world, and furnished me with a thousand mercies. Love hath provided for me, delivered me, and preserved me, till now; and will it not entertain my separated soul? Is God like false or insufficient friends, that forsake us in adversity?

I confess that I have wronged love by sin; by many and great unexcusable sins. But all, save Christ himself, were sinners, which love did purify, and receive to glory. God, who is rich in mercy, for the great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ: by grace we are saved; and hath raised us up together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus; Eph. ii. 4—6. O that I could love much, that have so much forgiven! The glorified praise him who loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and made us kings and priests to God; Rev. i. 5, 6. Our Father, that hath loved us, giveth us consolation and good hope, through grace; 2 Thess. ii. 16. I know no sin which I repent not of with self-loathing; and I earnestly beg and labor that none of my sins may be to me unknown. I dare not justify even what is any way uncertain; though I dare not call all that my sin which siding men, of different judgments, on each side, passionately call so. While both sides do it on contrary accounts, and not to go contrary ways, is a crime. O that God would bless my accusations to my illumination, that I may not be unknown to myself! Though some think me much better than I am, and others much worse, it most concerneth me to know the truth myself; flattery would be more dangerous to me than false accusations. I may safelier be ignorant of other men's sins than of my own. Who can understand his errors? Cleanse me, Lord, from secret sins, and let not ignorance or error keep me in impenitence; and keep thou me back from presumptuous sins; Psalm xix. 12, 13. I have an advocate with the Father, and thy promise, that he that confesseth and forsaketh his sins shall have mercy. Those are, by some men, taken for my greatest sins, which my most serious thoughts did judge to be the greatest of my outward duties, and which I performed through the greatest

difficulties, and which cost me dearest to the flesh, and the greatest self-denial and patience in my reluctant mind. Wherever I have erred, Lord, make it known to me, that my confession may prevent the sin of others; and where I have not erred, confirm and accept me in the right.

And, seeing an unworthy worm hath had so many testimonies of thy tender love, let me not be like to them, that, when thou saidst, 'I loved you,' unthankfully asked, 'Wherein hast thou loved us?' Mal. i. 2. Heaven is not more spangled with stars than thy word and works with the refulgent signatures of love. Thy well-beloved Son, the Son of thy love, undertaking the office, message, and work of the greatest love, was full of that Spirit which is love, which he sheds abroad in the hearts of thine elect, that the love of the Father, the grace of the Son, and the communion of the Spirit, may be their hope and life. His works, his sufferings, his gifts, as well as his comfortable word, did say to his disciples, "As the Father loved me, so have I loved you; continue ye in my love;" John xv. 9. And how, Lord, shall we continue in it, but by the thankful belief of thy love and loveliness, desiring still to love thee more, and in all things to know and please thy will; which thou knowest is my soul's desire.

Behold, then, O my soul, with what love the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit have loved thee, that thou shouldest be made and called a son of God, redeemed, regenerate, adopted into that covenant state of grace in which thou standest. "Rejoice, therefore, in hope of the glory of God, being justified by faith, having peace with God, and access, by faith and hope, that maketh not ashamed; that, being reconciled, when an enemy, by the death of Christ, I shall be saved by his life;" Rom. v. 1, 2. Having loved his own, to the end he loveth them, and without end. His gifts and calling are without repentance. When Satan, and thy flesh, would hide God's love, look to Christ, and read the golden words of love in the sacred gospel; and peruse thy many recorded experiences, and remember the convictions which secret and open mercies have many a time afforded thee. But especially draw nearer to the Lord of love, and be not seldom and slight in thy contemplations of his love and loveliness; dwell in the sunshine, and thou wilt know that it is light, and warm, and comfortable. Distance and strangeness cherish thy doubts; acquaint thyself with him, and be at peace.

Yet look up, and oft and earnestly look up, after thy ascended, glorified Head, who said, "Tell my brethren I ascend to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God." Think where and what he is, and what he is now doing for all his own; and how humbled, abased, suffering love is now triumphant, regnant,

glorified love ; and therefore no less than in all its tender expressions upon earth. As love is no where perfectly believed but in heaven, so I can no where so fully discern it, as by looking up by faith to my Father and Savior, which is in heaven, and conversing more believingly with the heavenly society. Had I done this more and better, and as I have persuaded others to do it, I had lived in more convincing delights of God's love, which would have turned the fears of death into more joyful hopes, and more earnest desires to be with Christ, in the arms, in the world, in the life of love, as far better than to be here, in a dark, a doubting, fearing world.

But. O Father of infinite love ! though my arguments be many and strong, my heart is bad, and my strength is weakness, and I am insufficient to plead the cause of thy love and loveliness to myself or others. O, plead thy own cause, and what heart can resist ? Let it not be my word, only, but thine, that thou lovest me, even me, a sinner : speak it as Christ said to Lazarus, " Arise." If not, as thou tellest me that the sun is warm, yet as thou hast told me that my parents and my dearest friends did love me, and much more powerfully than so. Tell it me, as thou tellest me that thou hast given me life, by the consciousness and works of life ; that while I can say, " Thou that knowest all things, knowest that I love thee ;" it may include, ' Therefore I know that I am beloved of thee ;' and therefore come to thee in the confidence of thy love, and long to be nearer in the clearer sight, the fuller sense, and joyfuller exercise of love forever. Father, into thy hand I commend my spirit. Lord Jesus, receive my spirit ! Amen.

APPENDIX.

A BRIEVE OF THE HELPS OF FAITH, HOPE AND LOVE.

A BRIEVE OF THE PROOF OF SUPERNATURAL REVELATION, AND THE TRUTH OF CHRISTIANITY.

1 TIMOTHY iii. 16.

WITHOUT CONTROVERSY, GREAT IS THE MYSTERY OF GODLINESS: GOD WAS MANIFESTED IN THE FLESH, JUSTIFIED IN THE SPIRIT, SEEN OF ANGELS, PREACHED TO THE GENTILES, BELIEVED ON IN THE WORLD, RECEIVED UP INTO GLORY.

THESE are the creed, or six articles of the gospel, which the apostles preached.

I. God, manifested in the flesh of Jesus, is the first and great article. Believe this, and believe all. No wonder that believing Jesus Christ is the Son of God is so often made in Scripture the description of saving faith, the title to baptism, and pardon, and salvation, the evidence of the Spirit, &c. He that truly and practically believeth that God came in flesh to man, and that Christ is the Father's messenger from heaven, must needs believe that God hath a great value for the souls of men, and for his church, that he despiseth not even our flesh; that his word is true, and fully to be trusted; that he who so wonderfully came to man, will certainly take up man to him. Who can doubt of the immortality of souls, or that Christ will receive the departing souls of the faithful to himself, who believeth that he took man's nature, and hath glorified it now in heaven, in union with the divine? Who can ever have low thoughts of God's love and mercy who believeth this? and who can prostitute his soul and flesh to wickedness, who firmly believeth that he took the soul and flesh of man to sanctify and glorify it?

II. The Holy Spirit is the justification of the truth of Jesus Christ. He is Christ's advocate and witness to the world. He

proveth the gospel by these five ways of evidence: 1. By all the prophecies, types, and promises of Christ in the Old Testament, before Christ's coming. 2. By the inherent impress of God's image on the person and doctrine of Christ; which, *propria luce*, sheweth itself to be divine. 3. By the concomitant miracles of Christ: read the history of the gospel for this use, and observe each history. 4. By the subsequent gift of the Spirit to the apostles and other Christians, by languages, wonders, and multitudes of miracles, to convince the world. 5. By the undeniable and excellent work of sanctification on all true believers through all the world, in all generations, to this day. These five are the Spirit's witness, which fully testifieth the certain truth that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.

Quest. But how are we sure, who, ourselves, never saw the person, miracles, resurrection, ascension of Christ, that the history of them is true?

Ans. I. We may be sure that the spectators were not deceived. II. And that they did not deceive them to whom they reported it. III. And that we are not deceived by any miscarriage in the historical tradition to us.

1. It was not possible that men that were not mad, that had eyes and ears, could, for three years and a half, believe that they saw the lame, the blind, the deaf, and all diseases, healed, the dead raised, thousands miraculously fed, &c., and this among crowds of people that still followed Christ, if the things had not been true. One man's senses may be deceived at some one instance, by some deceitful accident; but that the eyes and ears of multitudes should be so oft deceived, many years, in the open light, is as much as to say, no man knoweth any thing that he seeth and heareth.

II. That the disciples who received the apostles' and evangelists' report of Christ, were not deceived by the reporters, is most evident.

For, 1. They received it not by hearsay, at the second hand, but from the eye and ear witnesses themselves, who must needs know what they said.

2. They heard this report from men of the same time, and age, and country, where it was easy to examine the case, and confute it, had it been false.

3. The apostles appealed to crowds and thousands of witnesses as to many of Christ's miracles, who would have made it odious, had it not been true.

4. They sharply reprov'd the rulers for persecuting Christ, which would provoke them to do their best to confute the apostles for their own justification.

5. Christ chose men of no great human learning and subtlety;

but common, plain, unlearned men, that it might not be thought a deceit of art.

6. Yea, he did not make much more known to them before his death, than the bare matters of fact which they daily saw, and that he was the Christ, and moral doctrine: his death, resurrection, ascension, and kingdom of heaven, they knew little of before; but experience, and the sudden coming down of the Spirit, suddenly taught them all the rest.

7. They taught not one another, but were every one personally taught of God.

8. And yet they all agreed in the same doctrine when they were dispersed over the world, and never differed in any one article of faith.

9. They were men that had no worldly interest, wealth, or dominion to seek.

10. Yea, they renounced and denied all worldly interest, and sealed their testimony by their sufferings and blood; and all in hope of a heavenly reward, which they knew that lying was no means to obtain.

11. Had they plotted to cheat the world for nothing, the sin is so heinous that some one of them would have repented and confessed it, at least at death; which none of them did, but died joyfully, as for the truth.

12. Paul was converted by a voice and light from heaven, in the presence of those that traveled with him, in his persecuting design.

13. But yet it is a fuller evidence, that the doctrine which they delivered, as from God, beareth a divine impress; that, as the light, it is its own evidence.

14. And for the more infallible conviction, they that testified of Christ's miracles, did the like themselves to confirm their testimony. They spake with tongues which they never learned; they healed all diseases; even the shadow of Peter, and the clothes that came from Paul, did heal men; they raised the dead; and they that in all countries converted the nations by their own miracles, attesting the miracles and resurrection of Christ, must needs compel the spectators to believe them.

15. Yet, more than all this, those that believed them were presently enabled to do the like, in one kind and degree or other. The same extraordinary gift of the Spirit fell upon the common multitude of believers, by the laying on of the apostles' hands; so that Simon Magus would fain have bought that power with money. And when men witnessed Christ's miracles, and wrought the like themselves, and those that believed them had and did the like,

either healing, tongues, prophecy, or some wonder, it was, sure, an infallible way of testifying.

16. When wrangling heretics quarreled with the apostles, and would draw away disciples to themselves, by disparaging them, they still appealed to the miracles wrought by these disciples themselves, or in their sight ; as Gal. iii. 1, 2, 3. 5. And 'as Christ, when the Jews said he did all by Beelzebub, when he cast out devils, asked them, "By whom do your children cast them out?" which, had it been false, would have turned all the people from them.

17. Their adversaries were so far from writing any confutation of their testimony, that they confessed the miracles, and had no shift, but either to blaspheme the Holy Ghost, and say that they were done by the devil, or else, by persecution and violence, to oppress them. As if the devil were master of the world, and could remedilessly deceive it against God's will ; or God himself would send or suffer a full course of miracles remedilessly to deceive the world, which is to make God like the devil ; or as if the devil were so good as, by miracles, to promote so holy, and amiable, and just a doctrine, as that of Christianity, to make men wise, and good, and just, and kill their sin ; so that this blasphemy of the Holy Ghost makes Satan to be God, or God to be Satan.

18. All the cruelty, powers, learning, and policy of their adversaries was not able to stop the progress of this testimony, much less to prevail against it.

III. It is then most certain, that the first witnesses were not deceived by Christ, nor believers after deceived by them. The next question is, whether we be not deceived by a false historical tradition of these things. Had we seen them all ourselves, we must needs have believed ; but at this distance we know not what misreports may intervene. What eyesight and hearing was to them, that tradition is to us. Now the question is, Is it certainly the very same fact and doctrine which they received, and which we receive ?

And here let it be premised, that there is no other way of assurance, than that which God hath afforded us, that the reason of man could have desired.

1. If we would see God, and heaven, and hell, this is not a way suitable to the state of probationers that live in flesh on earth. Angels live by vision, and fruition of glory ; and brutes, by sense, on sensible beings ; but reasonable travelers must live by reason, and by believing certain revelation.

2. If God will send his Son from heaven to ascertain us, and we will believe no more than we see ourselves, then Christ must

dwell on earth, to the end of the world, and he must be in all places of the earth at once, that all may see ; and he must die and rise again before all men in all ages ; and how mad an expectation is this !

3. Or if all that deliver us the history must work miracles before our eyes, or else we will not believe them, it is still most absurd. Will you not believe that the laws of the land are genuine, or that ever there were such kings as made them, unless he that tells it you work miracles ? Shall not children believe their parents, or scholars their tutors, unless they work miracles ?

4. I must premise that there are three sorts of tradition, i. Such as depends on the common wit and honesty of mankind. And this is very much to be suspected, wickedness, folly, and lying being grown so common in the world.

ii. Such as depends on the extraordinary skill and honesty of some proved men. And this deserveth much belief ; but it is an uncertain human faith.

iii. Such as depends on natural necessity, and cannot possibly be false. We have both these last to ascertain us of the gospel history.

This resteth on a distinction of the acts of man's will : some of them are mutably free ; and these give no certainty : some of them are naturally and immutably necessary, and man can do no otherwise ; and these give even natural, infallible certainty. Such are to love one's self, to love felicity, to hate torment and misery, &c., and to know that which is fully manifest to our sound senses, &c.

When men of contrary interests and temper all confess the truth of known things about which their interests stand cross, it is a physical evidence of truth.

On this account men's agreement about natural notices is infallible.

It seems strange that all the world, from Adam's time, are agreed which is the first, second, and third, &c. day of the week, and not a day lost till now. It could be no otherwise, because, being a thing of natural interest and notice, if any kingdom had lost a day by oversleeping, or had agreed to falsify it, all the rest of the world would have shamed them.

Thus all Grecians, Latins, Englishmen, &c., agree about the sense of words ; for if some would pervert them, the rest would detect it.

Thus we are certain that the statutes of the land are not counterfeit. For men of cross interest hold their lands and lives by them ; and if some did counterfeit them, the rest would, by interest, be bound to protect it.

Arg. 1. There can be no effect without an adequate cause ; but in nature there is no cause that can make all men agree to assert a known falsehood, or deny a known truth, against all their known interest ; therefore there can be no such effect.

Arg. 2. A necessary cause will necessarily effect ; but where men's known interest obligeth them to agree of a known truth, this is a necessary cause of certain credibility ; therefore it hath a necessary effect.

You know who were your parents, and when and where you were born, &c., by such tradition in a lower degree. This dependeth not on pretended authority, nor on mere honesty ; but on natural necessity.

Having premised this, I come to prove, that we have such tradition of physical, infallible evidence, that the faith of the present church, in the essentials, is the same which the first churches received infallibly from the apostles.

1. The world knoweth that ever since Christ's ascension, all that believed in him were baptized, as all Abraham's covenant seed were circumcised. And what is baptism, but a profession of belief in Jesus Christ, as dead, risen, and glorified ; and a devoting ourselves in covenant to God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost ? All that ever were Christians by solemn vow professed this same faith ; and this is such a tradition of Christianity as human generation, down from Adam, is of the same humanity in the world.

2. They that were baptized were catechised first ; in which the three articles of baptism were open to them ; of which Christ's death, resurrection, and ascension were part ; and this hath been an undeniable tradition of the same faith.

3. The sum of the Christian faith was, from the beginning, drawn up in certain articles called the creed, which expounded the three baptismal articles ; and all churches on earth had the same in sense, and most in words ; and all at age that were baptized, professed this creed ; which is as full a tradition of the same belief in Christ's birth, death, and resurrection, ascension, and glory, as speaking is a tradition of the same human nature.

4. Before Christ's ascension, he instituted the office of the sacred ministry, which, friends and foes confess, hath continued ever since. And what is this ministry, but an office of publishing the gospel of Christ, his life, death, miracles, resurrection, grace, &c. ? What else have they done in all ages in the world ? so that the office is an undeniable tradition.

5. Christ and his apostles instituted the weekly celebration of the remembrance of his resurrection on the Lord's days : friends and foes confess the history, that the first day of the week

hath been kept for such memorial ever since, through all the Christian part of the world, which proveth the uninterrupted belief of Christ's resurrection, as a notorious, practical tradition.

6. Christ and his apostles, ever since his resurrection, instituted solemn assemblies of Christians to be held on those days, and at other times; once a week was the least through the Christian world; and what did they meet for, but to preach, hear, and profess the same Christian faith?

7. It was the constant custom of Christians in their assemblies, and their houses, to sing hymns of praise to Jesus Christ, in remembrance of his resurrection, &c. Pliny tells Trajan that this was the practice by which Christians were known by their persecutors; which is a practical tradition.

8. Jesus Christ instituted, and all Christians to this day have constantly used, the sacrament of Christ's sacrifice, called the eucharist; to keep in remembrance his death till he come, and profess their belief that he is our life. And as the constant celebration of the passover, with all its ceremonies, was a most certain tradition of the Egyptians' plagues and Israelites' deliverance, more than a bare written history would be, so hath the Lord's supper been, of the uninterrupted belief of the history of our redemption by Christ.

9. The church hath, from the beginning, had a constant discipline, by which it hath kept itself separate from heretics, who have denied any essential article of this faith; which is a sure tradition of the same belief.

10. None question but Christians have, from the beginning, been persecuted for this same faith, and in persecution made confession of it: persecutors and confessors, then, are both the witnesses of the continuance.

11. Whenever heretics or enemies have written against Christians, their apologies and defenses show that it was this same faith which they owned.

12. Most of the adverse heretics owned the same matters of fact.

13. The Jews were long before in possession of the books of the Old Testament, which bear their testimony to Christ.

14. The books of the New Testament have, by certain tradition, been delivered down to this present day, which contain the matters of fact and doctrine, the essentials, integrals, and accidents of the faith.

15. No enemies have written any thing against the matter of fact, of any moment.

16. Yea, the Jews, and other bitterest enemies, confess much of the miracles of Christ.

17. Martyrs have cheerfully forsaken life and all in confessing it.

18. God, by his wonderful providence, hath maintained it.

19. The devil, and all the wicked of the world, are the greatest enemies to it.

20. The Holy Ghost hath still blessed it, to work the same holy and heavenly nature and life, in all sincere and serious believers.

Quest. This proveth infallibly the tradition of the same faith in the essentials; but how prove you that the same Holy Scripture is delivered as uncorrupted?

Ans. All the Bible is not brought down so unchanged as are the essentials of our religion: when there were no Bibles but what scriveners wrote, no wonder if oversight left few copies without some of their slips. There are hundreds of various readings in the New Testament, and of many no man can be certain which is true; but none of them are such as make any difference in the articles of our faith or practice, nor on which any point of doctrine or fact dependeth.

And the words are necessary but for the matter which they do record.

And 1. All ministers, and all churches, constantly used this same Scripture, publicly and privately, as the word of God, so that it could not be easily altered.

2. They all knew that a curse is pronounced against every one that addeth or diminisheth; which must needs possess them with fear of corrupting it.

3. They took it to be the charter of their own salvation.

4. The work of the ministers was to expound it, and preserve it against corrupters.

5. These ministers and churches were overmuch of the world, and could not agree together to corrupt it; and if some did it, all the rest would soon detect it.

6. Heresies and quarrels were quickly to rise among them; so that cross interests and animosities would soon have fallen upon the corrupters.

7. Some heretics made some adding and corrupting attempts, which the church presently condemned and turned it to their shame.

8. In all the disputations then managed, the same Scriptures were appealed to.

9. The translations into various languages show that the books were the same, without any momentous difference.

10. To this day, when sin and tyranny have torn the church into many factions, they all receive the same canonical Scriptures, ex-

cept that some receive more apocryphal writings, which yet make no alteration at all of our gospel faith.

Quest. But doth not this laying so much on tradition favor Popery?

Answ. No. The difference is here. 1. Papists are for tradition as a supplement to the Scripture, as if this were but part of the word of God; and, 2. They plead for a peculiar power of being the keepers and judges of that supplemental tradition which other churches know nothing of.

But we, 1. Plead for the infallible, practical tradition of the essentials of Christianity by itself, and in the creed, &c., which is less than the Scripture; 2. And next, for the certain tradition of the Scripture itself, uncorrupted in all that faith depends on; which Scripture is the complete record of God's will and law, containing more than essentials and integrals.

So much of God, I. Manifested in the flesh; II. Justified in the Spirit.

III. He was seen of angels; that is, angels were the beholding, witnessing, and admiring servants of this great mystery, God manifested in the flesh.

1. Angels preached Christ at his incarnation.
2. Angels ministered to Christ in his temptations, agonies, &c.
3. Angels were preachers and witnesses of his resurrection.
4. Angels rolled away the stone, and terrified the soldiers.
5. Angels preached his return to them that gazed up at his ascension.
6. Angels opened the prison doors, and set the imprisoned apostles free once, and Peter alone, afterwards.
7. Angels rejoice in heaven at the conversion of all that Christ brings home.
8. Angels disdain not to be the guardians of the least of Christ's disciples.
9. Angels are protecting officers over churches and kingdoms.
10. Angels have preached to apostles, and been the messengers of their revelations.
11. Angels have been the instruments of miracles, and of destroying the church's enemies.
12. Angels will ministerially convoy departed souls to Christ.
13. Angels will gloriously attend Christ at his return, and sever the wicked from the just.
14. Angels will be our companions in the heavenly choir forever.

Therefore, 1. We should love angels. 2. And be thankful to God for them. 3. And think the more comfortably of heaven for

their society. 4. And pray for the benefit of their ministry on earth, especially in all our dangers.

IV. The fourth article is, "Preached to the Gentiles." The Jews, having the covenant of peculiarity, were proud of their privilege, even while they unworthily abused it; and despised the rest of the world, and would not so much as eat with them, as if they had been God's only people. And, indeed, the rest of the world was so corrupted, that we find no one nation, that, as such, renounced idolatry, and was devoted in covenant to the true God alone, as the Jews were. Now that God should be manifested in flesh, to reconcile the heathen world to himself, and extend greater privileges, indefinitely, to all nations, than ever the Jews had in their state of peculiarity, this was a mystery of godliness, which the Jews did hardly yield belief to.

And that which aggravateth this wonder is, 1. That the Gentile world was drowned in all idolatry and unnatural wickedness, such as Paul describeth. And that God should suddenly and freely send them the message of reconciliation, and be found of them that sought him not, is that wonder which obligeth us Gentiles, who once lived as without God in the world, to be thankful to him; Rom. i. 2. Eph. ii. and iii. 18, &c.

V. The fifth article is, "Believed on in the world." The effect of the gospel on the souls of men, in their effectual faith, is one of the evidences of the Christian truth.

I told you before, that the fifth witness of the Spirit on the souls of all believers, I reserved to be here mentioned. Here, I. It is a part of the wonder, that Christ should be believed on in the world, even with a common faith. For, 1. To believe a mean man to be the Mediator between God and man, and the Savior of the world; yea, one that was crucified as a malefactor; this must needs be a difficult thing.

2. The very Jewish nation was as contemptible to the Romans, being one of their poorest subdued provinces, as the Gentiles were to the Jews; and Christ was by birth a Jew.

3. The greatness of the Roman empire, then, ruling over much of the world, was such that by preaching, and not by war, to bring them to be subjects to a crucified Jew, was a marvelous work; and so to bring the conquered nations to become Christ's voluntary subjects.

4. The Roman and Greek learning was then at the height of its perfection; and the Christians were despised by them as unlearned barbarians; and that learning, arts, and empire should all submit to such a King and Savior, was certainly a work of supernatural power. Christ did not levy armies to overcome the na-

tions, nor did victory move them ; but the victors and lords of the world, and these no fools, but the masters of the greatest human wisdom, were conquered by the gospel, preached by a sort of inferior men.

5. And this gospel which conquered them was still opposed by them, and the Christians persecuted as a sort of hated men, till it overcame the persecutors.

It is true, that heathenism hath the greatest part of the world, and Mahometans have as much as Christians ; but one sort got it by the sword, and the other by the doctrine and holy lives of a few unarmed, inferior men.

II. But I use this of the extent of faith, but as a probable, and not a cogent argument ; but the main argument is from the sanctifying effect of faith.

I know it will be said that many, or most, Christians are as bad as other men.

But it is one thing to be of a professed religion, because it is the religion of the king and country, and therefore maketh for men's worldly advantage, and they hear little said against it: this is the case of most in the world; Christians, Mahometans, and heathens ; and it is another to be a serious believer, who, upon trial and consideration, chooseth Christianity.

And it is notorious that such serious Christians are all holy, sober, and just, and so greatly differing from the corrupted world, as fully proveth that God owneth that gospel which he maketh so effectual to so great a change.

Here, consider, 1. What that change is. 2. How hard and great a work it is. 3. That it is certainly a work of God. 4. That the gospel is the means by which God doth it.

1. The nature of his holy work on all serious, sincere Christians, is, it sets all their hopes and hearts on the promised glory of the life to come, and turns the very nature of their wills into the pre dominant love of God and man, and of heaven and holiness. It mortifieth all fleshly lusts, and subjects sense to reason and faith, the body to the soul, and all to God. It sets a man's heart on the sincere study of doing all the good he can in the world, to friends, neighbors, and enemies, especially the most public good. To live soberly, righteously, and godly, is his delight. Sin is his chief hatred, and nothing more grievous to him than he that cannot reach to greater perfection in faith, hope, obedience, patience, and in heavenly love and joy. It causeth a man to contemn wealth, honor, and fleshly pleasure, and life, in comparison of God's love and life everlasting. This change of God's Spirit worketh on all true believers.

Those that are ungodly have but the name of Christians ; they

never well understood what Christianity is, nor ever received it by a true belief. But all that understandingly and seriously believe in Jesus Christ are sanctified by his Spirit.

2. And this is a greater work than miracles, in excellency and difficulty.

(1.) It is the very health of the souls. It is salvation itself: it maketh man, in his measure, like to God, and is his image. It is a heavenly nature, and is the earnest and preparation for heaven. It delivereth man from the greatest evil on earth, and giveth him the firmest peace and joy, in his peace with God, the pardon of his sins, and the hope of everlasting glory.

(2.) It is easy to discern how great a work this is, by the deep roots of all the contrary vices in the corrupted nature of man. Experience assureth us that man, by vitiated nature, is proud and ignorant, and savoreth little but the things of the flesh, and worldly interest, and is a slave to appetite and lust: his bodily prosperity is all that really hath his heart. Yea, if God restrain them not, all wicked men are bitter enemies to all that are truly wise and holy, even among heathens and infidels: if any be but better than the rest, the wicked are their deadly enemies. There is so visible an enmity between godliness and wickedness, the seed of Christ, and of the serpent in the world, as is a great confirmation of the Scripture which describeth it. And it is not the name of Christians that altereth men's nature. We, here, that have peace from all the world, are under such implacable hatred of wicked men, that call themselves Christians, that so many bears or wolves would be less hurtful to us.

(3.) And the universal spreading of this wickedness over all the earth, in all ages and nations, doth tell us how great a work it is to cure it.

(4.) And so doth the frustration of all other means, till the Spirit of God do it by setting home the gospel upon the heart. Children will grow up in wickedness, against all the counsel, love, and correction of their parents. No words, no reason, will prevail with them, more than with drunken men or beasts.

(5.) We find it a very hard thing to cure a man of some one rooted sin, much more of all.

(6.) The common misery of the world proclaimed man's vice, and the difficulty of the cure. How else comes the world to live in self-seeking falsehood, fraud, malice, and in bloody wars, worse than wolves and serpents against each other?

(7.) Lastly, where God cureth this by true believing, it is done with the pangs of sharp repentance, and a great conflict, before God's Spirit overcometh.

3. It is evident, then, that this sanctification of souls is an emi-

nent work of God himself. (1.) In that it is yet done on so many of his chosen ones, in all ages and places.

(2.) In that, as hard as it is, he usually turneth the hearts of sinners to himself in a very little time. Sometimes by one sermon.

(3.) It is a work that none can do but God, who hath the power of souls.

(4.) It is a work so good, that it beareth God's own image. It is but the writing of his law and gospel on men's hearts. None is so much for it as God. Satan apparently fighteth against it with all the power he can raise in the world. Mark it, and you will find that most of the stir that there is in the world, by false teachers, and tyrants, and private malice, is but Satan's wars against faith, and holiness, and love. Certainly it is not he that promoteth them.

4. And it is evident in experience, that it is the gospel of Christ which God useth and blesseth, to do this great sanctifying work on souls. Among Christians, none are converted by any other means. And God would not bless a word of falsehood and deceit to such great and excellent effects. All that are made holy and heavenly, and truly conscionable, among us, are made so by Christ's gospel. And all the wicked are enemies to the serious practice of it, or rebels that despise it. The effects daily prove that God himself owneth it as his word.

If you say, there are as good men among the heathens and Mahometans, as holy, heavenly, and just; I answer, it is none of my business to depreciate other men, but I can say, (1.) That I have lived above seventy-seven years, and I never knew one serious, holy person in England, that was made such by the writings of heathens or Mahometans. (2.) Many excellent things are in the writings of some heathens—Plato, Cicero, Hierocles, Plutarch, Antonine, Epictetus, and many others; but I miss in them the expressions of that holy and heavenly flame of mind and life, and that victory over the flesh and world, which Christianity containeth.

(3.) Christ is like the sun, whose beams give some light before it is seen itself at its rising, and after it is set. The light of Jews and heathens was as the dawning of the day before sun-rising. And the light among the Mahometans is like the light of the sun, which leaveth it when it is set.

Doubtless, the same God who hath used Mahometans to be his dreadful scourge to wicked Christians, who abused the gospel by a false profession, hath also used them to do abundance of good against idolatry in the heathen world. Wherever they come, idolatry is destroyed. Yea, the corrupt Christians, Greeks, and especially Papists, that worship images, angels, and bread, are rebuked and condemned, justly, by Mahometans. But O, that they

who have conquered so far by the sword, were conquered by the sacred word of truth, and truly understood the mystery of redemption, and the doctrine of the gospel of Jesus Christ!

Obj. But they think us idolaters, for saying that Christ is God, and believing the Trinity.

(1.) As to the Trinity—it is no contradiction that one fire or sun should have, essentially, a virtue or power to move, light, and heat; nor that one soul should have a power of vegetation, sense, and reason; nor, as rational, to have a peculiar power or vitality, intellection, and free-will. Why, then, should the Trinity seem incredible?

(2.) We do not believe that the Godhead hath any change, or is made flesh, or the manhood made God, but that the Godhead is incomprehensibly united to the human nature by assumption, so as he is united to no other creature, by and for those peculiar operations on the humanity of Christ, which make him our Redeemer.

They that well think that God is all in all things, more than a soul to all the world, and as near to us as our souls to our bodies, in whom we live, and move, and have our being, will find that it is more difficult to apprehend how God is further from any soul, than that he is so much one with Christ; save that different operations of God on his creatures are apparent to us.

By all this, we see that every sanctified Christian hath the certain witness in himself that Christ is true. He is truly a Physician that healeth, and a Savior that saveth all that seriously believe and obey him. The Spirit of God in a new, and holy, and heavenly nature of spiritual life, and light, and love, is the witness.

VI. The sixth article in my text is, "Received up into glory."

That Christ, after forty days' continuance on earth, was taken up into heaven, in the sight of his disciples, is a matter of fact, of which we have all the forementioned infallible proof, which I must not here again repeat.

And, 1. If Christ were not glorified now in heaven, he could not send down his Spirit with his word on earth, nor have enabled the first witnesses to speak with all tongues, and heal the sick, and raise the dead, and do all the miracles which they did. A dead man cannot send down the Holy Spirit in likeness of fiery cloven tongues, nor enable thousands to do such works; nor could he do what is done on the souls of serious believers in all ages and nations to this day. He is sure alive that makes men live; and in heaven, that draws up hearts to heaven.

2. And this is our hope and joy: heaven and earth are in his power. The suffering and work which he performed for us on earth was short, but his heavenly intercession and reign is everlasting. Guilty souls can have no immediate access to God. All is

by a Mediator; all our receivings from God are by him, and all our services are returned by him, and accepted for his sake. And as he is the Mediator between his Father and us, his Spirit intercedeth between him and us. By his Spirit he giveth us holy desires, and every grace. And by his Spirit we exercise them in returns to him.

And our glorified Savior hath Satan, and all our enemies, in his power; life and death are at his command; all judgment is committed to him. He that hath redeemed us is preparing us for heaven, and it for us, and receiveth our departing souls to his own joy and glory. He hath promised us that we shall be with him where he is, and shall see his glory. He that is our Savior will be our Judge. He will come with thousands of his angels, to the confusion of wicked unbelievers, and to be glorified in his saints. He will make a new heaven and a new earth, in which righteousness shall dwell. Angels and glorified saints shall, with Christ our Head, make one city of God, or holy society and choir, in perfect love and joy, to praise the blessed God forever.

The Differences between this World and that which I am going to.

I. This world is God's footstool. That is his throne.

II. Here are his works of inferior nature and of grace. There he shineth forth in perfect glory.

III. Here is gross, receptive matter, moved by invisible powers, There are the noblest efficient communicative powers, moving all,

IV. This is the inferior, subject, governed world, That is the superior, regent world.

V. This is a world of trial, where the soul is his that can win its consent. That is a world where the will is perfectly determined and fixed.

VI. Satan, winning men's consent, hath here a large dominion of fools. There he is cast out, and hath no possession.

VII. Here he is a tempter and troubler of the best. There he hath neither power to tempt nor trouble.

VIII. This world is as the dark womb, where we are regenerated. That is the world of glorious light, into which we are born.

IX. Here we dwell on a world of sordid earth. There we shall dwell in a world of celestial light and glory.

X. Here we dwell in a troublesome, tempting, perishing body. There we are delivered from this burden and prison into glorious liberty.

XI. Here we are under a troublesome cure of our maladies. There we are perfectly healed, rejoicing in our Physician's praise,

XII. Here we are using the means in weariness and hope There we obtain the end in full fruition.

XIII. Here sin maketh us loathsome to ourselves, and our own annoyance. There we shall love God in ourselves, and our perfect selves in God.

XIV. Here all our duties are defiled with sinful imperfection. There perfect souls will perfectly love and praise their God.

XV. Here Satan's temptations are a continual danger and molestation. There perfect victory hath ended our temptations.

XVI. Here still there is a remnant of the curse and punishment of sin. Pardon and deliverance are perfected there.

XVII. Repenting, shame, sorrow, and fear, are here part of my necessary work. There all the troublesome part is past, and utterly excluded.

XVIII. Here we see darkly, as in a glass, the invisible world of spirits. There we shall see them as face to face.

XIX. Here faith, alas! too weak, must serve instead of sight. There presence and sight suspend the use of such believing.

XX. Desire and hope are here our very life and work. But there it will be full felicity in fruition.

XXI. Our hopes are here oft mixed with grievous doubts and fears. But there full possession ends them all.

XXII. Our holy affections are here corrupted with carnal mixtures. But there all are purely holy and divine.

XXIII. The coldness of our divine love is here our sin and misery. The perfection of it will be there our perfect holiness and joy.

XXIV. Here, though the will itself be imperfect, we cannot be and do what we would. There will, and deed, and attainment, will all be fully perfect.

XXV. Here, by ignorance and self-love, I have desires which God denieth. There perfect desires shall be perfectly fulfilled.

XXVI. Here pinching wants of something or other, and troublesome cares, are daily burdens. Nothing is there wanting, and God hath ended all their cares.

XXVII. Sense here rebelleth against faith and reason, and oft overcometh. Sense there shall be only holy, and no discord be in our faculties or acts.

XXVIII. Pleasures and contents here are short, narrow, and twisted with their contraries. There they are objectively pure and boundless, and subjectively total and absolute.

XXIX. Vanity and vexation are here the titles of transitory things. Reality, perfection, and glory, are the titles of the things above.

XXX. This world is a point of God's creation, a narrow place

for a few passengers. Above are the vast, capacious regions, sufficient for all saints and angels.

XXXI. This world is as Newgate, and hell as Tyburn; some are hence saved, and some condemned. The other world is the glorious kingdom of Jehovah with the blessed.

XXXII. It was here that Christ was tempted, scorned, and crucified. It is there where he reigneth in glory over all.

XXXIII. The spiritual life is here as a spark or seed. It is there a glorious flame of love, and joy, and the perfect fruit and flower.

XXXIV. We have here but the first-fruits, earnest, and pledge. There is the full and glorious harvest and perfection.

XXXV. We are here children in minority, little differing from servants. There we shall have full possession of the inheritance.

XXXVI. The prospect of pain, death, grave, and rottenness, blasteth all the pleasures here. There is no death, or any fear of the ending of felicity.

XXXVII. Here even God's word is imperfectly understood, and errors swarm, even in the best. All mysteries of nature and grace are there unveiled in the world of light.

XXXVIII. Many of God's promises are here unfulfilled, and our prayers unanswered. There truth shineth in the full performance of them all.

XXXIX. Our grace is here so weak, and hearts so dark, that our sincerity is oft doubted of. There the flames of love and joy leave no place for such a doubt.

XL. By our inconstancy, here one day is joyful and another sad. But there our joys have no interruption.

XLI. We dwell here with sinful companions, like ourselves, in flesh. There holy angels and souls, with Christ, are all our company.

XLII. Our best friends and helpers are here, in part, our hinderers by sin. There all concur in the harmony of active love.

XLIII. Our errors and corruptions make us also hurtful and troublesome to our friends. But there both Christ and they forgive us, and we shall trouble them no more.

XLIV. Selfishness and cross interests here jar, and mar our conversation. There perfect love will make the joy of every saint and angel mine.

XLV. A militant church imperfectly sanctified here liveth in scandal and sad divisions. The glorious church united in God in perfect love hath no contention.

XLVI. Sin and error here turn our very public worship into jars. The celestial harmony of joyful love and praise is, to mortals, inconceivable.

XLVII. Weak, blind, and wicked teachers here do keep the most in delusion and division. There glorious light hath banished all lies, deceit and darkness.

XLVIII. The wills of blind tyrants is the law of most on earth. The wisdom and will of the most holy God is the law of the heavenly society.

XLIX. Lies here cloud the innocency of the just, and render truth and goodness odious. All false judgments are there reversed, and slander is silenced, and the righteous justified.

L. Government is here exercised by terror and violence. But there God ruleth by light, love, and absolute delight.

LI. Enemies, reproach, and persecution here annoy and tempt us. All storms are there past, and the conquerors crowned in joyful rest.

LII. The glory of divine love and holiness is clouded here by the abounding of sin, and the greatness of Satan's kingdom upon earth. But the vast, glorious, heavenly kingdom, to which this earth is but a point and prison, will banish all such erring thoughts, and glorify God's love and goodness forever.

LIII. This is the world which, as corrupted, is called an enemy to God and us, and which, as such, we renounce in baptism, and must be saved from. That is the world which we seek, pray, and wait for all our lives, and for which all the tempting vanities of this must be forsaken.

LIV. This body and world is like our riding clothes, our horse, our way, and inn, and traveling company; all but for our journey homeward. The other is our city of blessedness, and everlasting rest, to which all grace inclineth souls, and all present means and mercies tend.

LV. The very ignorance of nature and sensible things makes this life a very labyrinth, and our studies, sciences, and learned conversation, to be much like a dream, or puppet play, and a childish stir about mere words. But in heaven, an universal knowledge of God's wonderful works will not be the least of the glory in which he will shine to saints.

LVI. Distance and darkness of souls here in flesh, who would fain know more of God and the heavenly world, and cannot, doth make our lives a burden by these unsatisfied desires. There glorious presence and intuition giveth full satisfaction.

LVII. Our sin and imperfection here render us incapable of being the objects of God's full, complacential love, though we have his benevolence, which will bring us to it. But there we shall, in our several measures, perfectly please God, and be perfectly pleased in God forever.

LVIII. All things here are short and transitory from their

beginning, posting towards their end, which is near and sure, and still in our eye. So short is time, that beings here are next to nothing; the bubble of worldly prosperity, pomp, and fleshly pleasure, doth swell up, and break in so short a moment, as that it is, and is not, almost at once. But the heavenly substances, and their work, and joys, are crowned by duration, being assuredly everlasting.

Such, O my soul, is the blessed change which God will make.

The Reasons and Helps of my Belief and Hope of this Perfection.

I. Natural reason assureth me, that God made all creatures fitted to their intended use; even brutes are more fit to their several offices than man is. He giveth no creature its faculties in vain: whatever a wise man maketh, he fits it to the use which he made it for; but man's faculties are enabled to think of a God, of our relation, and our duty to him, of our hopes from him, and our fears of him; of the state of our souls related to his judgment; of what will befall us after death, reward, or punishment, and how to prepare for it. This nature and its faculties and powers are not made in vain.

II. Reason assureth me, that all men are bound by nature to prefer the least probability of a life of everlasting joy before all the prosperity of this world; and to suffer the loss of all this short vanity, to escape the least possibility of endless misery; and nature hath such notices of rewards and punishments after death, that no man can say that he is sure there is no such thing. From whence it followeth, that all men are bound by the very law of nature to be religious, and to seek first and most the salvation in the life to come. And if so, it is certain that there is such a thing to be obtained; else God had made the very nature of man to be deceived by itself, and to spend the chief part, yea, all his life, through labor and suffering, for that which is not; and so made his greatest duty to be his greatest deceit and misery; and the worst men should be least deceived. But all this is not to be imputed to our wise and good Creator.

III. The universal sense of moral good and evil, in all mankind, is a great evidence of another life. The vilest atheist cannot abide to be accounted a knave, a liar, and a bad man; nor will equal a vicious servant with another. All would be thought good, who will not be good. And doth not God make a greater difference than man? and will he not show it?

IV. The world is actually ruled much by the hopes and fears of another life, and cannot well be ruled without it, according to

the nature of man ; but the almighty, most wise, and most holy God needs not, and will not rule the world by mere deceit.

V. The gospel of Christ hath brought life and immortality into a clearer light than that of nature ; and it must be by believing in Christ that we must have our full satisfaction. O, what hath God done in the wonders of redemption to make us sure ! And against the doubts that are apt to rise from some hard particular text of Scripture, it must be considered, 1. That Christ and his apostles did put the ascertaining seal of the many uncontrolled miracles to the gospel doctrine, primarily ; which doctrine, (1.) Was delivered and sealed eight years before any of the New Testament was written, and almost seventy before the last. (2.) And Christ did not speak in the language in which the gospel is written to us ; so that, being but a translation as to his own words, the matter is the thing first sealed.

2. And that it was the two legislative mediators, Moses and Christ, who came with the great stream of uncontrolled miracles ; it being necessary that men should have full proof that a law or doctrine is of God, before they believe it ; but the priests and prophets after Moses, and the preachers and pastors of the Christian church, who were not commissioned to bring men any new laws or gospel, but to proclaim and teach that which they received, needed no such testimony of miracles.

3. The belief of every particular priest or prophet after Moses, or every pastor after Christ and his apostles, was not of the same degree of necessity to salvation as the belief of the law and gospel itself. Therefore, though all the Holy Scripture be true, the law and the gospel must be much differenced from the rest.

4. The history of the law and gospel have full, ascertaining, historical evidence ; or else there is none such in the world. Therefore the doctrine must be true.

5. The prophecies fulfilled prove the gospel true.

6. And the divine impress on the whole.

7. And the sanctifying work of the Spirit wrought by it, in all nations and ages, on serious believers, is a constant, divine attestation.

VI. And as my faith hath so sure a foundation, it confirmeth my faith and hope, that it hath been so long and great a work of God, by his Word and Spirit on my soul, to raise it to believe, and love, and desire, that holy state of perfection and fruition which I hope for. That which hath made me so much better than I else had been, and turned my heart and life (though imperfectly) to things above the pleasures of the flesh, must needs be of God ; and God would never send his grace to work my heart to deceit and lies,

and give me such graces as all shall be frustrate : his Spirit is the earnest and first-fruits of glory.

VII. And all the course of religious and moral duty which he hath commanded me, and in which he hath employed my life, were never imposed to deceive me. I am sure by nature and Scripture, that it is my duty to love God and my neighbor, to desire protection, and to serve God, and do good with all my time and power, and to trust God for my reward, believing that all this shall not be in vain ; nor that which is best be made my loss. O, blessed be God for commands and holy duty ; for they are equal to promises. Who can fear that he shall lose by seeking God ?

VIII. As God hath sealed the truth of his word as aforesaid, so he hath, by an instituted office and ordinance, sealed and delivered to myself his covenant, with the gift of Christ and life, in baptism, and the Lord's supper.

IX. He hath given me such a love to holy things and persons, that I greatly long to see his church in perfect light, and love, and concord. O, how sweet would it be to see all men wise, and holy, and joyfully praising God ! Every Christian longs for this ; and, therefore, such a state will be.

X. I have found here the great benefit of the love and ministry of angels, such as is described in Psalm xci. They have kept me, night and day, which confirmeth my hope that I shall dwell with them ; for I love them better than men, because they love and serve God better.

XI. That low communion which I have here with God by Christ and the Spirit, in his answer to my prayers, supports, comforts, experience, tends to more.

XII. The pleasure which I have by love, in thinking of the happiness of my many, many, many holy departed friends, and of the glory of Christ, and the heavenly Jerusalem, is, sure, some hopeful approach towards their state.

XIII. When I see the fire mount upward, and think that spirits are of a more sublime and excellent nature than fire ; and when I see that all that is done in this world is done by spiritual, unseen powers, which move this gross and drossy matter, it puts me past doubt, that my soul, being a spirit, hath a vast and glorious world of spirits to ascend to. God hath, by nature, put into all things an aggregative, uniting inclination : earth hath no other natural motion. The ascent of fire tells us its element is above ; and spirits naturally incline to spirits, and holy spirits peculiarly are inclined to the holy.

XIV. I am sure, 1. By understanding that I understand, and by willing that I will, &c. 2. I am sure, by these acts, that I have the power or faculties to do them ; for none doth that which it

cannot do. 3. And I know that it is a substance that hath these powers ; for nothing can do nothing.

My soul, then, being certainly an intellective, volitive, vital substance, 1. I have no reason to think, that God, who annihilateth not the least sand, will annihilate so noble a substance.

2. Nor that he will destroy those powers which are its essential form, and turn it into some other thing.

3. Nor that such essential powers shall lie as dead and unactive, and so be continued in vain.

4. There remaining, therefore, nothing uncertain to natural reason, but the continuance of individuation to separate souls, (1.) Apparitions and witches have put that out of doubt, notwithstanding many fables and delusions. (2.) Christ hath put it more out of doubt. (3.) While substance, faculties, and acts continue, it is the error of our selfish state in flesh, which maketh any fear too near an union, which shall end our individuation. The greatest union will be the greatest perfection, and no loss to souls.

XV. God's wonderful providences for the church and single saints on earth are such as tell us of that love and care, which will bring them afterwards to him.

XVI. The nature of God taketh off the terror of my departure much : I am sure I shall die at the will, and into the hand, of infinite essential love and goodness,—whose love should draw up my longing soul.

XVII. I am going to a God whose mercies have long told me, that he loveth me better than my dearest friend doth, and better than I love myself, and is a far better chooser of my lot.

XVIII. As he hath absolute right to dispose of his own, so indeed the fulfilling of his will is the ultimate end of all things, and therefore most desirable in itself ; and his will shall be fulfilled on me.

XIX. I go to a glorified Savior, who came down to fetch me up, and hath conquered and sanctified death, and made it my birth-day for glory, and taketh me for his dear-bought own and interest, and is in glory ready to receive his own.

XX. I go to that Savior who, on the cross, commendeth his spirit into his Father's hand, and taught me, with dying Stephen, to say, " Lord Jesus, receive my spirit."

XXI. I go no solitary, untrodden way, but follow all the faithful since the death of Abel, to this day, (save Enoch and Elias,) who all went by death into that glorious world, where I shall find them.

XXII. I have so long groaned under a languid body, and in a blind, distracted, and (by man) uncurable world, where Satan, by lies, malice, and murder, reigneth in—alas ! how many ; and espe-

stally am so weary of my own darkness, and sinful imperfection, that I have great reason to be willing of deliverance.

XXIII. I have had so large a share of mercies in this world already, in time, and manifold comforts from God, that reason commandeth me to rest in God's time for my removal.

XXIV. I shall leave some fruits, not useless, to serve the church when I am gone ; and if good be done, I have my end.

XXV. When I am gone, God will raise up and use others to do his appointed work on earth ; and a church shall be continued to his praise ; and the spirits in heaven will rejoice therein.

XXVI. When I am gone, I shall not wish to be again on earth,

XXVII. Satan, by his temptations, and all his instruments, would never have done so much as he doth in the world to keep us from heaven, if there were not a heaven which conquerors obtain.

XXVIII. When darkness and uncertainty of the manner of the action and fruition of separated souls would daunt me, it is enough to know explicitly so much as is explicitly revealed, and implicitly to trust Christ with all the rest : our eyes are in our Head, who knoweth for us. Knowledge of glory is part of fruition ; and therefore we must expect here no more than is suited to a life of faith.

XXIX. All my part is to do my own duty, and then trust God ; obeying his commanding will, and fully and joyfully resting in his disposing and rewarding will. There is no rest for souls but in the will of God ; and there with full trust to repose our souls, in life, and at death, is the only way of a safe and comfortable departure.

XXX. The glorious marriage-day of the Lamb cannot now be far off, when the number of the elect shall be complete, and Christ will come with his glorious angels, and will be glorified in his saints, and admired in all believers, and there shall be a new heaven and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness ; and that kingdom shall come, where that which God hath prepared for them that love him, eye hath not seen, ear hath not heard, nor hath it entered into the heart of man to have a formal, full conception of it.

Come, Lord Jesus ; come quickly. Amen.

Fear not, then, O my soul, to lay down this flesh : mercy hath kept it up for my preparing work ; but, O, what a burdensome and chargeable companion hath it been ! Is it better than the dwelling-place of perfect spirits ? O, what are my groans, and all my cold and faint petitions, and my dull thanksgiving, to their harmonious, joyful praise ! If a day in God's courts be better than a thousand, what is a day, yea, what is everlastingness, in the heavenly society and work ! O, how hateful a thing is darkness

and unbelief, when the remnants of them thus stop poor souls in their ascent, and make us half unwilling to go home! What! unwilling to be with my glorified Lord! Unwilling to be with saints and angels, who are all life, and light, and love! Unwilling to see the glory of Jehovah! O foolish, sinful soul! hath Christ done so much to purchase the heavenly glory for thee, and now art thou unwilling to go into the possession of it? Hast thou been seeking, and praying, and laboring, and suffering so many years, for that which now thou seemest scarce willing to obtain? Dost thou not judge thyself unworthy of eternal life, when thou no more desirest to enjoy it? All this is along of thy too much adherence unto self and sense: thou art still desiring sensitive satisfaction, and, not content to know thy part, wouldest know that for thyself which Christ knoweth for thee; as if thou couldest better trust thyself than him. Fear not, weak soul; it is our Father's good pleasure to give thee the kingdom. Trust infinite power, wisdom and love: trust that faithful, gracious Savior who hath so wonderfully merited to be trusted: trust that promise which never deceived any one, and which is confirmed by so many miracles, and by the oath, and by the Spirit of God. Whenever thou departest from this house of flesh, the arms of mercy are open to embrace thee; yea, essential, transcendent love is ready to receive thee: the Spirit of love hath sealed thee to that blessed state: Christ will present thee justified and accepted. Most of my old, holy, familiar friends are gone before me, and all the rest that died since the world began. And the few imperfect ones left behind are hastening after them apace, and if I go before, will quickly overtake me: though they weep as if it were for a long separation, it is their great mistake: the gate of death stands all day open, and my sorrowful friends are quickly following me, as I am now following those for whom I sorrowed. O, pity them who are left awhile under the temptations, dangers, and fears, which have so long been thine own affliction! but be not afraid of the day of thy deliverance, and the bosom of everlasting love, and the society of the wise, and just, and holy, and of the end of all thy troubles, and the entrance into the joy of thy Lord, and the place and state of all thy hope. O, say, not notionally only, as from argumentative conviction, but confidently, and with glad desire and hope, to depart and be with Christ, is far better than to be here.

But, O my God, I have much more hope in speaking to thee than to myself. Long may I plead with this dark and dull, yet fearful soul, before I can plead it into joyful hopes and heavenly desires, unless thou shine on it with the light of thy countenance, and thou, whom my soul must trust and love, wilt give me faith and love themselves. I thank thee for convincing arguments; but

had this been all the strength of my faith and hope, the tempter might have proved too subtle for me in dispute. I thank thee, that some experience tells me that a holy appetite to heavenly work, and a love to the heavenly company and state, doth more to make me willing to die, and think with pleasure of my change, than ever bare arguments would have done. O, send down the streams of thy love into my soul, and that will powerfully draw it up by longings for the near and full fruition! O, give me more of the divine and heavenly nature, and it will be natural and easy to me to desire to be with thee: send more of the heavenly joys into this soul, and it will long for heaven, the place of joy! I must not hope on earth for any such acquaintance with the world above as is proper to the enjoying state. But if the sun can send its illuminating, warming rays to such a world as this, according to the various disposition of the recipients, doubtless thou hast thy effectual, though unsearchable, ways of illuminating, sanctifying, and attractive influence on souls. And one such beam of thy pleased face, one taste of thy complacential love, will kindle my love, and draw up my desires, and make my pains and sickness tolerable. I shall then put off this clothing with the less reluctancy, and willingly leave my flesh to the dust, and sing my *nunc dimittis*, when I have thus seen and tasted thy salvation. O, my God, let not thy strengthening, comforting grace now forsake me, lest it should overwhelm me with the fears of being finally forsaken. Dwell in me as the God of love and joy, that I may long to dwell in love and joy with thee forever. As grace abounded where sin abounded, let thy strengthening and comforting mercy abound when weakness increaseth, and my necessities abound. My flesh and my heart faileth, but thou art the strength of my heart, and my portion forever: this short life is almost at an end; but thy loving kindness is better than life. I know not with what pains thou wilt further try me; but if I love thee, thou hast promised that all things shall work together for my good. The world that I am going to by death is not apparent to my sight; but my life is hid with Christ in God, and because he liveth we shall live; and we shall be with him where he is; and when he appeareth, we shall appear with him in glory, and shall enter into our Master's joy, and be forever with the Lord. Amen.

What sensible Manifestation of his Kingdom Christ gave in his Transfiguration.

1. Our Lord, who brought life and immortality to light, well knew the difficulty of believing so great things unseen; and therefore it pleased him to give men some sensible helps by demonstra-

tion. In Matt. xvi. and xvii. 1, 2, &c. Mark ix. 1. Luke ix. 98. he promised some of the disciples a sight of his kingdom, as coming in power; or such a glimpse as Moses had of the back parts of God's glory: this he performed first in his transfiguration, as afterward in his resurrection, ascension, and sending the Holy Ghost to enable them, with power to preach, and work miracles, and convert the nations.

2. By the kingdom of God, is meant God's government of his holy ones, by a heavenly communication of life, light and love, initially on earth by grace, and perfectly in heaven by glory—a special theocracy.

3. For the understanding of this, we must know, that when God had made man good, in his image, he conversed with him in a heavenly manner, either immediately or by an angel, speaking to him, and telling him his will. But man being made a free, self-determining agent, he was left to choose whom he would follow; and, hearkening unto Satan, and turning from God, he became a slave of Satan, and gave him advantage to be his deceiving ruler: not that man's rebellion nullified God's power, or disposing government, or took man from under obligation to obedience; but that, forsaking God, he was much, though not wholly, forsaken by his special fatherly, approving government, and left to Satan and his own will; but the eternal Word interposing for man's reprimand and redemption, undertook to break the serpent's head, and to conquer and cast out him that had deceived and captivated man; and, choosing out a special seed, he made them a peculiar people, and set up a heavenly, prophetic government over them, himself, by heavenly revelation, making their laws, and choosing their chief governors under him, from time to time, and would not leave it to blind and sinful man to make laws, or choose princes, for themselves, but would keep them in a special dependence upon Heaven. But the carnal Israelites, having provoked God by odious idolatry, to deny them much of the benefit of government, (save when they repented, and cried to him for help,) they thought to amend this, by choosing a king like other nations, and ending their dependence on heavenly relation, and choice for government; and so theocracy was turned into a more human regiment, and God more cast off; though yet he would not quite forsake them. And the rest of the world was yet more left under the power of Satan, and their own corrupted mind and will; so that Satan hath both an internal kingdom in wicked souls, and a visible political government of the wicked kingdoms of the world, ruling them by men that are ruled by him. And as Christ came to cast him out of men's hearts, by his sanctifying, conquering Spirit, so also to cast him out of the political government of the kingdoms of the world,

and to bring them under the laws, and officers, and Spirit of Christ, and rule them by heavenly power and love, as his own kingdoms, that he may bring them to perfection in one celestial kingdom at last. And in this sense we pray, "Thy kingdom come."

4. To make men believe that he is the heavenly King sent from God to cast down Satan's kingdom, was the great business of the preaching of the gospel: this he would demonstrate, as by all his miracles which showed him to have the victory of devils, and to be the Lord of life, so also by visible apparition in glory. And it is said (1 John v. 7, 8.) that there are three witnesses in heaven and three in earth; so here Christ would have three heavenly and three earthly witnesses of his transfiguration. From heaven he had the witness, 1. Of a voice, proclaiming, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear him." 2. Of Moses, the chief lawgiver. 3. And of Elias, the chief prophet; to tell us that the law and the prophets are his prognosticating witnesses: but "hear him" notifieth to us, that Christ and his gospel are to be heard above the law and the prophets, and to teach us more than they could teach us: the law was given by Moses, (with its types and shadows,) but grace and truth (the substance so typified) are by Jesus Christ.

5. Light and glory are often of the same signification. Christ was transfigured into a lucid, glorious appearance of body. He tells us by this, that he would have us have some sort of idea of his kingdom, fetched from sense: many apparitions of angels have been in lights. Christ appeared to Saul in a visible light; Acts ix. So did he to John; Rev. i., &c. God and the Lamb are the light of the New Jerusalem. It is an inheritance of the saints in light.

Some seem to me to think too basely of sense, and too far to separate it from intellectual spirits, both as to power, act, and object; and all because they find it in lower creatures. They might accordingly deny substantiality to spirits, because brutes are substances: the higher have all the perfections of the lower, either formally or eminently. It is not a spirit's perfection to be insensible, or to have nothing to do with sensible things, but to be eminently sensible, and to be superior agents on lower sensibles. God is love; and love is complacency; and a high degree of complacency is delight or joy. So that God is essential, infinite joy, but without that drossy quality which is proper to souls in flesh, and all that imperfection which belongs to creatures. Can we tell what it is to enter into our Master's joy, or joyfully to love and praise him, without any sense? I rather think, that as vigorous youth makes men capable of more delight than decrepit, languid, painful age and sickness,—so heaven shall, by perfecting our na-

tures, make them capable of inconceivably more joy than any on earth is capable of.

And as we shall have sense in exaltation as to power and act, so shall we have sensible objects. God himself delighteth in all his works, and so shall we. We must not, on pretense of taking the heavenly Jerusalem to be merely spiritual, deprive ourselves of all the sensible ideas of it which God's description offereth to us. Light is sensible; Christ glorified there is sensible; Moses and Elias were sensible to Peter, James, and John. Lazarus and Abraham were sensible to the man in hell; Luke xvi. Stephen saw heaven open, and Christ sitting at the right hand of God. And all eyes shall see him at his glorious return. Heavenly glory is not enjoyed only by mere thinking and knowing, nor as in a dream, but by the most eminent intellectual sensation, exalted and invigorated.

6. Say not then, O my soul, that this kingdom of glory is so far above thee, that thou canst have no idea of it. Think not that it is therefore unmeet for thy desiring and joyful hopes, because thou canst not know what it is. Hast thou no conception of the difference between light and darkness? If thou hadst been but one year kept in absolute darkness, wouldest thou have no desiring thought of light? The blind think themselves half dead while they are alive. Indeed, the faculty and object must be suitable: light may be too great for our weak eyes, as heat may be torment in an unsuitable degree; but when our souls are perfected, they will be suitable recipients of a more glorious light than we can here endure. Moses is not there covered in a cleft of the rock, because he could see but as the back part of God's glory. We must see here but as in a glass, but there as face to face. Though these organical eyes, as spectacles, shall be laid by, we shall have media more perfect, suitable to our perfect state.

And as I can think of heaven as a region of glorious light, so can I think of it as a place and state of life and love. I know somewhat of the difference of life and death, and that a living dog is better than a dead lion. And I have felt what it is to love my friends, and thence to desire their new communion as my delight; and can I then have no idea of that world, where life, light and joyful love are the very element of souls, as water is to the fishes?

And as I can have some idea of that state in general, so may I of the state of the perfected spirits of the just which are there. They are connatural to their proper element. They are essential created life, light and love. And they want not substance to be the basis of those formal powers, nor objects on which to exercise them. Think not, then, that heaven is so far inconceivable, as not by any idea to be thought of. If we have no conception of it, we

can have no desires of it, and no delightful hope. What can we conceive of more certainly than of life, and light, and love; of a region, and of persons essentiated of these? Do we not know what knowledge is, and see what light is, and feel what life and love are?

But it is true, that our conceptions hereof are lamentably imperfect; and so they must be till possession, fruition, and exercise, perfect them. Who knoweth what light or sight is, but by seeing; or what knowledge is, but by knowing; or what love and joy are, but by love and rejoicing? And who knows what perfect sight, knowledge, love and joy are, but by perfect seeing, knowing, loving, and rejoicing? No man, by an intuitive or immediate perception. But some abstractive conceptions of it we may have by reasoning deduction from that poor degree which we here, in the kingdom of grace, possess.

Can I perceive substantiality in the dark, terrene appearances, which are but mutable, lifeless matter, agitated and used by invisible powers; and shall I think of those unseen, powerful substances, as if they were less substantial for being spiritual, or were not objects for a knowing thought? Are the stars, which I see, less substantial than a carcass in a darksome grave? The Lord that appeared in shining glory hath members, in their measure, like himself; and hath promised that we shall shine as stars in the kingdom of his Father. If some degree of this be here performed in them who are called the children of light, and the lights of the world, how much more will they shine in the world of light! They that call light a quality, or an act, must confess it hath a substance whose quality or act it is. Alas! what a deceived thing is a sensual unbeliever, who spendeth his life in the pursuit of fugitive shadows, and walketh in a vain show, and thinks of spiritual, glorious substances, as if they were the nothings or delusions of a dream!

7. Christ, Moses, and Elias, here visibly appeared as three distinct, individual persons. This tells us that it is a false conceit that death ceaseth individuation, and turneth all souls into one, (of which before :) perfect, indivisible, infinite unity is proper to God: from this one is multiplicity. Reason forbids us, when we see the numberless individuals in this world, and see, also, the numerous stars above, to imagine that all the worlds above us have so much of divine perfection, as to be but one undivided substance, and to have no multiplicity of inhabitants. Yea, some of those Sadducees hold that the stars are worlds inhabited, as the earth is. And why, then, should they think whithersoever souls go, that they cease their individuation, when they go among individuals? But Christ hath confuted them, even to sense. Moses is Moses still, and Elias is Elias still; and all our friends that are gone to

Christ are the same, still, that they were, and may be called by the same names. Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob are the same in heaven; and Lazarus was Lazarus in Abraham's bosom. When we lay by flesh, and are unclothed, we put not off our personalities. Every one shall receive his own reward according to what he hath done in the body, when every one must give account of his own works and talents.

Why, then, may not I, with distinct conceptions and joyful desires, look after the souls of my departed friends, that are now in the celestial kingdom? Though malignity hath scorned me for naming some few in my 'Saints' Rest,' being such as the despisers hated, yet I forbear not, on such accounts, to solace myself by naming more, but because they are more than it is fit to number. In all places where I have lived, how many excellent souls (though here they were not perfect) are gone to Christ! How sweet is the remembrance of the communion which I had with many of them in Shrewsbury, and other parts of Shropshire; of many at Dudley, and the adjoining parts; of multitudes at Kidderminster, Bewdley, and other parts of Worcestershire; of abundance at Coventry, and other parts of Warwickshire; and of many where I have sojourned in other parts of the land; and, above all, in London, and the adjoining parts! As Mr. Howe hath elegantly expressed it, in his excellent character of my excellent and dear friend, Mr. Richard Fairclough, what a multitude of blessed saints will arise, at the last day, out of London! And this earth is, as it were, hallowed with the dust and relics of so many blessed souls. But it is heaven that is spangled with these spiritual stars; the place honored with them, and they with it, and all by Christ. We are like infants, or lambs, or other young ones, that cry but for their dams, if they be out of sight; though they are ever so near, if they see them not, they cry as if they were not, or had forsaken them. As Christ told his disciples, that it was needful for them that he departed from them; and yet their hearts, for this, were sorrowful, till the Holy Ghost came upon them, as better than Christ's fleshly presence, to prepare them joyfully to follow him; so we think of our friends as almost lost to us by separation, till the heavenly Spirit tell us where they are, and prepare us to desire to be with them.

8. Elias hath a body now in heaven, and so hath Enoch; but can we think that only two or three that are there with Christ do so much differ from all the rest, as to have bodies when the rest have none? Is there such a dissimilitude of saints in heaven? What are two or three in such a society? Doubtless, their bodies are not corruptible flesh and blood, but such spiritual bodies as all saints shall have at the resurrection. But are they in heaven such

visible and shaped bodies as they appeared on the mount? The same difficulty poseth us about the risen body of Christ: he would not have Mary touch him, because he had not yet ascended to his Father: he could appear, and vanish from their sight, at his pleasure; and yet Thomas handled him, and felt that he had flesh and bones. That body of flesh ascended visibly up towards heaven; and yet it is not flesh and blood in heaven, but a spiritual body; for it is not worse than he will make his members. What shall we say to these things? We must say, that we are not capable of knowing them, but have reason to be thankful that we may know so much, more necessary for us. But yet it seemeth probable that the bodies of Christ, and Enoch, and Elias, were changeable, according to the region in which they were to be. Christ could take up a body of flesh and blood, and immediately change that state of it into a pure and incorruptible, spiritual body, as it entered into the incorruptible, spiritual region. And so God did by Enoch and Elias. As Paul saith, that we shall not all die, (those that live till Christ's appearing,) but we shall all be changed. And yet, if Elias have business on the mount, he can put on the clothing of a grosser body to be seen of men, and can lay it by, or return to his more invisible, spiritual state, when he returneth to the place from whence he came. And no wonder, when angels (and the ancients say Christ, before his incarnation) assumed bodies suitable to their several businesses on earth; yea, such as could eat and drink with men; when they dwelt not in heaven so coarsely clothed.

9. But how came Moses to have a body on the mount, who is said to have been buried, and, therefore, took none with him into heaven? We must still remember, that we inquire of things above our certain knowledge. But, in humble conjecture, we may say, that it is no more impossible for Moses to assume such a body as he appeared in on the mount, for that occasion, than for angels to appear in human shapes; and departed souls, too, as many apparitions have told men. And if bad souls can do it, why not good ones, when God will have it? The tradition seemeth but a Jewish dream, that God kept the body of Moses uncorrupted in the grave; and that this was it that the devil is said to strive for against Michael, that the body might be corrupted. And say others, that, at this transfiguration, it rose again. There need no such conceits to our satisfaction. The soul of Moses could assume a body.

10. But still, the dissimilitude of Enoch and Elias from all the saints in heaven is an unresolved difficulty. If we knew that God would have it so, it might satisfy us. But there is a symmetry in the body of Christ. And it is like, that the same region hath in-

habitants of the same nature. What shall we think, then, that Enoch and Elias, at their entrance into those regions, laid by their bodies, and became such as Abraham, and other holy souls? Why are they taken up, to be so laid by? The corruptibility, no doubt, they did lay by. God knoweth, but it is much unknown to us. Or shall we think, as all those fathers cited by Faustus Regiensis, and as Dr. More, and some of late, that all spirits are souls, and animate some bodies; and so that all in heaven have some bodies? If so, what bodies are they? and how differ they from the resurrection state? As the soul here operateth in, and by, the igneous spirits in our bodies, it may be so lodged in these as to take some of them with it at death, as the life of a dying plant, yet dieth not in the seed. And a man may be said to go unclothed to bed, though he put not off his shift or nearest garment, and to be clothed again when he puts on the rest. And at the resurrection, as there will be a new heaven and earth, so spirits, now in heaven, may have much more delightful business on the new and righteous earth than now they have, and, therefore, may have use for an additional body, as much differing from what they have now in heaven, as the new earth and their employment there require; and as the seed doth differ from the plant. And spirits, being communicative, will be more happy by more communication. As God delighteth to do good to all his works, so the souls now confined to heaven will delight to be employed in doing good to the new earth, and to animate the bodies suited to such work; though now they have use for no other than such spiritual, lucid receptacles as are fit for the regions where they dwell. And it will be no debasement or dejection for a spirit now in heaven to animate a body at the resurrection, fit for the new earth; no more than it was to angels to speak to Adam, and to Moses, to Abraham, Jacob, Manoah, and others; or than it is to the sun to enlighten and enliven things on earth.

It is a foolish thing to think, as some do, that departed souls will be as dormant and unactive as in apoplectic or sleeping persons, for want of organized bodies to act in. Spirits are essentially active, intellective, and volitive; and will God continue such essential powers in vain? Moses and Elias wanted not bodies; and those in heaven can praise Jehovah and the Lamb with holy, concordant love and joy; whether in any sort of ethereal bodies, or without, we shall shortly know.

It is said that Moses and Elias talked with Christ: this sheweth that Christ hath familiar communion with the blessed. He that would come into flesh on earth, and live with man in an humbled state, and refused not familiar converse with poor men and women, and would eat and drink with publicans and sinners,

will not refuse everlasting near familiarity with the glorified. If the church be his dearly-beloved spouse, and, as it were, one with him, as his body, surely he will be no stranger to the least and lowest member of it.

11. But what was it that they talked about? Luke (ix. 31.) saith, "They appeared in glory, and spake of his decease, which he should accomplish at Jerusalem." This was not to make it known to Christ, who came into the world to die for sin; what, then, was it for? Did Christ tell them of it, as not knowing it before? That is not likely, neither. Did he need their comfort, as angels in his trials ministered to him, and strengthened him? The particular uses of this speech we know not; but in general, we know it was somewhat preparatory to his great sufferings and death.

And must Christ's sufferings and death have such preparation? And must not mine have such premeditation? And do I not need the consolatory messages of God? Carnal men would rather have chosen pleasanter discourse, than the talk of sufferings and death. But that which must be undergone, and requireth greatest strength, must be forethought of, and requireth the most preparing thoughts. It is worse than madness to be surprised with sufferings and death, before it is seriously forethought of. So sharp a trial, and so great a change, require the greatest preparation. He that can refuse to suffer and die, may refuse to talk or think of it. If Christ must have men from heaven to talk with him of his cross, what cause have we to study the cross! even all our lives to foresee it, and, by obedient consent, to submit unto it, and take it up to follow Christ, and even to determine, with Paul, to know nothing in the world but Christ and him crucified; that is, to take this for the only needful and excellent learning. But, alas! how senselessly is death and suffering talked of, till it comes! Who are to learn how to suffer when suffering is upon us; and to learn how to die when nature, or the physician, passes the sentence of death on us at hand. And it is God's mercy to some of us to make our sufferings long, that we may have a competent time of learning. As we learn to write by writing, and to discourse by discoursing, and every art and trade by practice, even so by suffering we learn to suffer; and the lesson is very hard. Malefactors suffer without learning, whether they will or not; but to suffer obediently, with childlike affections, is the lesson to be learned. O! little, too little, do many honest Christians think how much of their excellent obedience consisteth in childlike, holy suffering; therefore they little expect it, and provide for it; and then they are overwhelmed with the unexpected surprisal when it comes. Even in the suffering which men bring on the faithful, for righteousness' sake, how many shrink, and shift

off their duty, or venture on forbidden things for safety, because they were not prepared for it ! The loss of goods, or imprisonment and want, seem to many almost insufferable trials. But I can tell such, by some experience, that bodily pain and torment is a far greater trial, which none of them are secured from, and requireth greater strength of faith obediently to accept it at the hand of God : and others can tell them that the violence of temptations, and the terrors of God on a wounded conscience, and troubled soul, are yet far harder than all these : and these are the saddest, because they make the mind unfit, at present, to improve them, and to refer them to holy ends and uses. Christ, in all his agony, and even when he cried out on the cross, " My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me ? " had his intellectuals free and perfect, to know the nature, the reason, the uses, and end of all his sufferings : but so have not many poor, distressed, troubled, distracted souls. O, how great a part of Christianity is it to understand and rightly bear the cross ! Most of our care is how to escape it, or to be delivered from it, rather than obediently to bear it.

12. Experience of a suffering, painful state is a great help to our understanding of the gospel. It taketh off from me the scandal of Christ's cross, and helpeth me to perceive the great use and reasons of it, when I am under sufferings. O ! what need have I of such an example as Christ's ! All the parts of his sufferings are as useful to teach me how to suffer, as the ten commandments to teach me what to do. That he was put to fly from proud, domineering Pharisees, false teachers, and worldly rulers, and to converse most with the poor, in wildernesses, or various obscure places ; that he was hated and persecuted for doing good, and accounted a sinner for neglecting men's ceremonies and traditions ; that he was hardly believed, even by them that saw his miracles ; and his own disciples were so slow in learning ; and that, in his suffering, they all forsook him and fled ; and one denied him with oaths and curses ;—all these are instructing instances. That Christ's natural, though sinless aversation to death and suffering, and his fear, should be so powerful, and the sense of God's punishing justice so terrible, as to make his soul sorrowful, even to the death, and cast him into an agony, where he sweat water and blood, and to pray thrice that the bitter cup, if possible, might pass from him, which he came into the world to drink ;—all these, also, are teaching parts of the sufferings of Christ, that rulers and priests, and soldiers, and the rabble, should agree to scorn him, clothe him in derision, spit on him, buffet him, scourge him, make him their jest that came to save them ; that they should make a sinner of him that never sinned, but came to destroy it, and save men from it ; yea, to make him no less than a deceiver, a blasphemers, and an usurping rebel

against Cæsar, and write this last as his accusation on his cross, thinking to leave his innocency no vindication or defence. For the Lord and Savior of the world to undergo all this, is very instructing to a suffering believer; that he should, as such a malefactor, be reviled on a cross, and numbered with transgressors, and his side be pierced, and he there cry out to his Father as forsaken by him; that thus dying he was buried, and his soul went to the place of separated souls, and yet into paradise. They are excellent lessons which may be learned from all this.

I am not to suffer for others, nor to make God's justice a satisfying sacrifice for sin, as Christ did; but I must suffer God's fatherly corrections, and the castigation of paternal, healing justice. I must be saved as by fire, and pass through this purgatory, that I may be refined: I must suffer from Christ and for Christ, for my sin, and also for righteousness' sake; and I must, with a filial justification of God's holiness and chastening justice, bear his indignation, because I have sinned against him. I am predestined to be conformed to Christ's image, in suffering and in sanctity; (Rom. viii. 30, &c.) yea, I must "count all things loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord," for whom I must not refuse to suffer the loss of all things, and count them dung, that I may win him, and be found in him, and not only know the power of his resurrection, but also the "fellowship of his sufferings, and be made conformable to his death;" Phil. iii. 8—10. Paul rejoiced in such infirmities, and in his suffering for the church, filling up that which was behind of the afflictions of Christ in his flesh; Col. i. 24. Peter bids us "rejoice, inasmuch as we are partakers of Christ's sufferings, that when his glory shall be revealed, we may be glad also with exceeding joy;" 1 Peter iv. 13. "If we suffer with him, that we may also be glorified with him;" Rom. vii. 17. It is a great gift to suffer for his sake; Phil. i. 29. It is for the kingdom of God that such suffer; 2 Thess. i. 5. It is happiness and joy to suffer for righteousness' sake, for well doing; 1 Pet. ii. 10. and iii. 14. 17. and iv. 15, 16. 19. Matt. v. 10, 11. It is the sufferings of Christ that abound in such, that their consolations may abound; 2 Cor. i. 5.

But, alas! I suffer much more for my own sin than for Christ and righteousness: but even this also by the cross of Christ is sanctified, and made a great remedy against my sin. As Christ suffered for our sins, and yet merited by his suffering, so if we accept the castigatory punishment, and exercise repentance and mortification in our suffering, and an obedient submission to the rod, God will take this as acceptable service, and bless it to our further good.

13. But how is it that Christ is said "to learn obedience by the things that he suffered, and so to be made perfect?" Heb. v. 8, 9.

Was he unlearned and imperfect before? He had no culpable imperfection; but his satisfactory mediation was imperfect till it was all performed: it was not perfectly done; and when it was done, he thereby was constitutively made a perfect Mediator; as he said upon the cross, "It is finished;" and as this human nature received additional acts of knowledge, as he grew up, and conversed with more objects, and so is said to increase in wisdom, (as Adam knew the creatures when he saw them,) so he had a new acquaintance with obedient suffering, when he was under the experience of it; and is said to learn it, in that he now exercised it.

And should not my suffering be God's school? Should I not learn obedience by it? Surely, as it smartly tells me of the evil of former disobedience, so it calls me to remember in whose hands I am, and with whom I have to do, and what is my duty in such a state: God can do no wrong to his own: he will do nothing finally hurtful to his children. In all our afflictions he is said to be afflicted, to signify that he afflicts not willingly, or without our provocation. Justice is good, and holiness is good; and it is good for us to repent, and be weaned from the flesh and world; and all good must be loved, and the means as such. Sharp, heart-breaking sermons are displeasing to nature; and yet to be loved for their use; and afflictions are God's powerful sermons: the proud and hardened are forced to hear them, who scorn and prosecute preachers for speaking the same things: and shall believers under sufferings be untaught? Words are but words, but stripes go by forcible sense unto the heart: obedient submission to the greatest pains is a serious acknowledgment of God's dominion, and of his wisdom and love, and the certain hopes of a better life. Impatience hath in it somewhat of atheism, or blasphemy: God is not duly acknowledged and honored. Job's wife would have had him thus purposely provoke God to end his misery by death; as if she had said, 'Speak no more well of him, by whom thou sufferest so much, nor honor a God that will not help thee.' But patience saith, "I will look unto the Lord; I will wait for the God of my salvation; my God will hear me." Mic. vii. 7.

Impatience sheweth a misunderstanding of God's dealing with the afflicted; but patience yieldeth, because it understandeth whence all comes, and what will be the fruit and end. A man that is let blood for his life, is not impatient with the chirurgeon; but a beast will strive, and a swine or child will cry.

Our burdens are heavy enough of themselves; impatience maketh them heavier, and is oft more painful than the thing which we suffer: some have gone mad with crosses, which to another would have been light. Patience is our cordial and *nepenthes*; yea, the health of the soul, by which it is able to bear its infirmities. "In

our patience we possess our souls ;" Luke xxi. 19. Whatever else we lose, we lose not ourselves. He that keepeth his faith, and hope, and love, by patience, keepeth his soul : but the impatient lose themselves, as if their other losses were not enough. A poor man singeth that gets his living only by his daily labor ; when a lord or knight would be tormented with sorrow, if he were reduced to his degree. Striving under our yoke and burden maketh it gall the more : and we cannot so hopefully or comfortably pray for deliverance from the pain which we make ourselves, as from that which God layeth on us ; though also there, we must pray for the grace that must save us from our own impatience.

Patience preventeth many sins which impatience causeth ; hard thoughts of God, if not hard and unseemly words : " Job sinned not, nor charged God foolishly : " impatience tempteth men to think that piety and prayer are in vain, and to condemn the generation of the just, and to leave off duty, and say, ' Why should I wait on God any longer ? ' Yea, and to venture on false and sinful means, in hopes of deliverance and ease.

Were it to men, we have much to allay our impatience ; but impatience against God hath no just excuse. Infinite power, wisdom, and goodness, can do nothing that deserveth blame : we have God's promise that all things shall work together for our good ; and is he not to be trusted ? Or is the means of our good to be accused ?

Impatience is unseemly for them that believe that heavenly rest and glory are at hand ; where all their pains and sorrows will end. Were a man on the rack, and were sure to have all that he desired after it, he would the more easily endure it. Why else did the martyrs so patiently suffer ? It is incongruous to complain of any thing that brings a man to heaven.

Christ himself was innocent, and yet accused not God for his sufferings. But we suffer justly for our faults ; and it is so much less than they deserve, that the sins which we suffer most for are said to be forgiven us, in that the everlasting punishment is forgiven. Should we so often sinfully please the flesh, and yet must it not smart ? Shall we so often grieve the Spirit of God, and not be grieved ? Shall we lose our time, neglect our duty, forget our home, fall in love with the world, and yield to temptations, and defile our souls with filth and vanity, and must not correction tell us of our sinful folly ? " If we suffer for our faults, and bear it patiently, it is not thankworthy ; " 1 Pet. ii. 20.

Our merciful Father doth use to shame us for our impatience, by the blessed end of our afflictions. The end that God made with Job showed the reasonableness of his patience. When our afflictions are over, do not all believers see cause of thankfulness

for them, and say, 'It is good for me that I was afflicted?' The pain is past, and the benefit remaineth. And if all that is past was mercy to us, why should we much fear that which is to come? Heaven will end all, and shame impatience forever.

Our patience is much of our perseverance : what a deal of labor do those impatient men lose, that learn, and pray, and are somewhat religious, and have not patience at the last assault to bear the trial, but fail when they seemed to be near the crown !

Hold out, then, poor desponding soul ! lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees, and run with patience the race which is set before thee, looking to Jesus, who, for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross. God will not deceive thy hopes. Sin hath brought pain and death on man ; but Christ hath sanctified it, and is the Lord of Life. Yet a little while and the heavenly possession shall turn thy sorrows into everlasting joy, and thy moans and groans into thanks and praise, and there shall be no more sickness, pain, or death. O foolish, unbelieving hearts ! that cry out of suffering, and fear deliverance ; that would fain be free from all affliction, and yet fly from the only state of freedom ; that are impatient under their calamity, and yet afraid of passing to the only rest !

14. But it is neither pain alone, nor death alone, that will sufficiently try our strength, and exercise our faith and patience. It must be great pain (and often long) in order to a certain, expected death. These two conjunct were the case of Christ. The torment of his agony, scourging, crucifying, piercing, and desertion, and the certainty of death that followed. Great pains, with hopes of recovery and ease may be borne even by a worldly man ; because there is still the worldly hope of better ; and so there is no denial of all, while life itself is not denied. We must receive the sentence of death in ourselves, if we will find that we trust in God alone, and trust him as one that raiseth the dead, that is, for another and better life.

As long as a man hath any hope of life and ease, a man's faith is not tried to the uttermost, by actual forsaking all. And yet an easy death alone doth not fully try a man ; for they that know that all must die, may submit to this, who cannot bear long pains before it. But great and long pains, and the sentence of death together, are the trial.

And if God will so try me, why should I repine ? Flesh will groan, but the mind may obediently submit. It is but flesh ; that flesh that hath tempted and imprisoned my soul. I have too much loved it, and am too loath to leave it ; and is it not mercy from God to make me weary of it ? God is engaged against idols ; that is, all that is loved and pleased before him ; and if any thing, that is likest

to be this flesh. Its corruptibility tells us, that both its pleasure and its pain will be but short. Long pain is usually tolerable ; and intolerable pain will conquer nature, and not be long. The grace of Christ is sufficient for us, and his strength is manifest in our weakness, when he will not take the thorn out of our flesh, though, as Christ and Paul did, we pray thrice, or oftener.

And to be impatient with death is to repine that we were born mortal men ; and to fly from heaven and all true hopes, and all the felicity purchased by Christ ; and is this renouncing the world, and trusting Christ for life everlasting ? And why fear we that which endeth all our pains and fears ? A true believer never suffereth so much, but his mercies are far more and greater than his sufferings. His soul is united to Christ : his hopes of heaven have a sure foundation : he is sealed up to glory : rest and joy are near at hand ; and former mercies should not be forgotten ; and should not such men patiently endure ? O what a shameful contradiction is it, to choose heaven as our only portion, to believe in Christ for it, and to seek it as the business of all our lives, and yet to be loath to die, that we may obtain it, and to fly with fear from that which we so seek and hope for ! What a contradiction is it to call God our God and Father, the God of Love, and to call Christ our gracious, glorified Redeemer, and to fly from his presence with distrustful fear ! Almighty love may correct us, may kill us, but it cannot finally hurt true believers.

So much of Moses' and Elias' discourse of the sufferings and death of Christ.

15. Sure it is not true that the souls of the fathers, before Christ's coming, did not enter into heaven, but lay in some inferior *limbus*. For Moses and Elias came from heaven ; their shining glory showed that, and their discourse with Christ, and the voice and glory that went with them. And it is not to be thought that they were separated from the rest of the souls of the faithful, and, with Enoch, were in heaven by themselves alone, and the rest elsewhere. Though it is said that God's house hath many mansions, and there are various degrees of glory, yet the blessed are all fellow-citizens of one society, and children in one family of God. And they that came from east and west, shall sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of God ; and Lazarus is in Abraham's bosom, and the believing thief with Christ in paradise.

16. It seems that Moses and Elias appeared thus, to foreshew the resurrection of Christ, and of the faithful, and to make it easier to the three disciples to believe it. Why should they doubt whether Christ should rise, when they saw that Moses was risen before him ? And why should they doubt of the resurrection of the faithful, and the glory following, when they saw these glorified

saints? Some think that this apparition was for the strengthening of Christ himself, whose human nature had use for such ministry also of angels; but it is more certain that it was for the strengthening of the disciples' faith, and of ours by their testimony. As it is said, "This voice came not because of me, but for your sakes;" John xii. 30.

17. It is much worth our noting, in what a communion this specimen of the kingdom of heaven was represented in the holy mount. Here was a voice of God, and a glimpse of his glory: here was our Redeemer in a glimpse of his glory: here was a Moses and Elias in a glimpse of their glory; and here were three beloved disciples yet in the flesh, and in weakness of faith, which needed such confirmation. God, our Father, and our Savior, the saints of heaven, and those on earth, are all of one society or kingdom. There is a near relation and a near communion among them all. When the eternal Word disdained not so wonderful condescension as to come to us in the form of a servant, even of a poor, despised, crucified man, it is less wonder that Moses and Elias should come down as his witnesses and servants. The heavenly Jerusalem, and city of the living God, of which we are enrolled burgesses or heirs, hath many parts. There is the assembly of the first-born, and innumerable angels, and the spirits of the just made perfect, and Jesus, the Mediator of the new covenant, and God the Judge of all; Heb. xii. 23, &c. O, what holy, glorious, joyful company shall we have above! Christ and his angels will not despise the least of saints.

18. But what was the introduction to this apparition and transfiguration? It was Christ's praying. "He went up into a mountain to pray, and, as he prayed, he was transfigured;" Luke ix. 28, 29. Surely this is written to invite and encourage us to pray. We are in greater need than Christ. It is folly in unbelievers to think prayers vain, because God is unchangeable. We are not unchangeable; and the exercise of faith, dependence on God, and true desires, being the condition required in a due receiver, maketh those blessings become ours, which else we had been incapable of. God, who commandeth fervent prayer, hath promised to answer it. Though we must not think to be the rulers of the world, nor have whatever our flesh or folly doth desire, because we ask it earnestly, yet true prayer is the appointed way for obtaining what we need, and is best for us, and we are fitted to receive. And as Christ had this wonderful return to his prayers, his servants have experience that their choicest mercies, for soul and body, have come this way.

19. Though the three disciples were admitted to this glorious society, how different was their case from that of Christ, and Mo-

ses, and Elias! In the beginning of the heavenly concourse, they were asleep with heaviness, even while this glorious company stood near them. Alas! such is our infirmity in flesh, and such a clog are these earthly bodies to us, that when God is present, and heaven is before us, and we have the greatest cause to watch and pray, a heavy, weary, sluggish body, even fethereth an active spirit, and we sleep, or turn away in wandering thoughts, when we should seriously converse with Christ and heaven. Alas! what unworthy servants hath our Lord! Are such as these meet for his work, his love, his acceptance, or his kingdom? But O, how merciful a Savior have we, who taketh not his poor servants at the worst, but when they have served him thus in his agony, he gently rebuketh them; "Could you not watch with me one hour?" and that with an excuse, "The Spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak."

20. It is a matter of great moment to understand in what cases this excuse will hold, and our weakness will not make the willingness of the Spirit unacceptable to God. If a drunkard, fornicator, or other sensualist, should say, 'My spirit is willing to leave my sin, but my flesh is weak, and a temptation doth prevail,' *Video meliora proborq*, &c.; this excuse would not prove God's forgiveness. If a man live in known sin, which he could forbear were he truly willing, and say, "To will is present with me, but to do I am unable; it is not I, but sin, that dwelleth in me;" this would be but a frivolous excuse; and yet to the sleepy disciples it was a good excuse, and I think to Paul; Rom. vii. Where, then, is the difference? There are some acts of man which the will hath not power to rule, and some that it can rule. The will hath not power always to keep a sleepy man awake: this sleep might be of the flesh without any will at all; and this excuseth from all guilt. There are some acts of man which the will cannot rule, but by a great degree of power and endeavor; as, perhaps, with much ado, by preventing and resisting diligence, the disciples might have kept awake: in this case, their sleep is a fault, but a pardoned fault of weakness. Some persons are liable to inordinate fear and grief, which so surpriseth them by the constitution of their bodies, that the greatest unwillingness would not hinder them. And some could do more to resist these passions than they do, but very hardly with the greatest diligence. These are accordingly excusable in degree. Paul would have perfectly obeyed God's law, and never have sinned. But there is no perfection in this life: mere imperfection of true grace, which is predominant in the will, doth not damn men. But there are acts which are so subject to the will, that a sincere will, though imperfect, can com-

mand them. He that doth these, (or doth the contrary,) it is not because he sincerely would, and cannot, but because he hath but ineffectual wishes, and is not sincerely willing, if he know them to be what they are; especially if they be materially great sins which he yieldeth to, which true grace more strongly resisteth than it doth an idle word, or thought, or action. In short, all omissions or commissions, in which the will is positively or privately guilty, are sinful in some degree; but only these do damn the sinner, which are inconsistent with the predominant love of God, and heaven, and holiness, in the soul.

21. When the disciples awaked, they saw these glorious ones in converse. Did they hear what they said, or did Christ after tell them? The latter is most probable. Doubtless, as Moses tells us how God made the world, which none could tell him but by God's telling them first, so the apostles have written many things of Christ, which they neither saw nor heard, but from Christ, that told it them by word, or inspiration. How else knew they what Satan said and did to him in his temptations in the wilderness, and on the pinnacle of the temple? How knew they what his prayer was in his agony? And so in this instance also. But Christ's own testimony was enough to put them out of doubt, to them that daily saw his confirming miracles.

22. How great a difference was there between mount Sinai and this mount! When God delivered the law to Moses, that mount was terrible in flame, and smoke, and thunder, so that the people trembled and fled: but now here is nothing but life, and light, and love from heaven. A merciful Redeemer, whose face shone as the sun, with heavenly company, appearing nearly to the disciples, pitying and bearing with their heaviness and infirmity, strengthening their faith and hope, and proving to them a resurrection, and a heavenly kingdom, by a visible apparition of some of its possessors. This was not a frightful, but a confirming, delectable sight: the law in terror was by Moses, but grace and truth, peace and pleasure, are by Christ.

This was an inviting and delighting, and not an affrighting, apparition. Was it not a shameful infirmity, and a sin, that Peter should deny Christ after such a sight as this, and the rest of his disciples forsake him and fly? What! after they had seen the kingdom of God come in power, and Christ's face shine as the sun in its brightness, could they forget all this? Or could they doubt whether he or his persecutors were the stronger, and liker to prevail at last? O, how frail, how uncertain, how bad a thing, is depraved man!

But though Christ found them asleep, and though he foreknew

that they would forsake him, he forsook not them, nor used them as they deserved, but comforted them with a glimpse of heaven ; for he died for his enemies.

23. But this was but once in all the time of his abode among them. It was an extraordinary feast, and not their daily bread : they had Christ still with them, but not transfigured in glory, nor Moses and Elias in their sight. We are too apt to think, that if God give us a joyful, extraordinary glimpse of heaven, we must have it always, or that he forsaketh us, and casts us off when he denieth it us. O that we were as desirous of holiness and duty as we are of the joy which is the reward ! But our Father, and not we, must be the chooser both of our food and feast. Moses did not dwell on mount Nebo, that he might still see the land of promise : it was enough to have one sight of it before his death. As flesh and blood cannot enter into heaven, so it is little of heaven that entereth into it.

24. When the disciples awake, they see his glory, and the two men that stood with them. It must not be a sleeping but an awakened Christian that will have a sight of heavenly glory. As we must love God with all the heart, and soul, and might, all must be awakened in seeking him, and in attending him, before we can have a joyful foretaste of his love. Carnal security, supine neglect, and dull contempt, are dispositions which render us incapable of such delights. Heavenly joy supposes a heavenly disposition and desires. Angels sleep not, nor are clogged with bodies of clay : earth hath no wings : it must be holy vivacity that must carry up a soul to God, notwithstanding the fetters of flesh. It is with each others' souls in the body that we converse together on earth. And it is not sluggish, but lively faith, and fervent desires, that must converse in heaven with Moses and Elias, and our living Head.

25. But how did Peter know Moses and Elias, whom he had never seen before ? Perhaps glorified saints do bear each one his notifying signature, and need not names and sound of words to make them known : perhaps Christ told the disciples who they were that talked with him : perhaps he made them know it by inspiration, as the prophets have their knowledge. Any of these ways God could notify them : it is not needful that we know which of them it was ; but that they were known, is certain. We shall be no strangers to any saints in heaven, and therefore not to our old acquaintance. Whether we shall have any greater love to them, or delight in them, for old acquaintance' sake, or because they were instruments of our good on earth, I know not ; but I know that our love to them with whom we had holy comfort on earth, may well render heaven more familiar to us now, and

more suitable to our desires. O! how great a number of my godly friends are there! They are so many that I cannot make a catalogue of their names, but the memory of abundance of them doth delight me. And when we meet, there, we shall be far better known to each other than we were to the most intimate on earth.

O, let Christians now so converse together as remembering that they must meet in heaven, where all that was secret will be brought to light. If we now put on any vizard, and seem better than we are; if we hide any sin, or base corruption; if we, by fraud or falsehood, deceive our friends, all this will be opened when we meet in heaven. It is a daily grief and shame to my soul, to think of the sins that I have committed against some that are now in heaven, which I either excused, extenuated, or hid, and to think how much evil they will know of me there, which on earth, they knew not by me. But God, who pardoneth them, will cause his servants there to forgive each other; but the detected sin, for all that, will be an odious, shameful thing. Lying and hypocrisy are there no cloak, but an aggravation, of the shame. If we cannot confess, and take shame to ourselves, by repentance, upon earth, how shall we appear in the open light, and see the faces of those whom we have wronged? What diminution it will make of our joy, I know not, but it must needs be a dishonor to have been false to God or man; and especially when we meet where sin is perfectly hated, to think how we either sinned together, or that we tempted and ensnared one another in any sin. How it will affect us then I do not fully know; but it is now to me a far greater grief to think of any in heaven whom I have tempted or wronged, than it was while they lived with me on earth. And I think there is somewhat of this nature common to good and bad: even the consciences of wicked men do haunt them for notable injuries to others, especially concealed ones, and especially for persecuting the servants of God, when they are dead, more than while they lived. Insomuch that (though I doubt not of real apparitions) I am ready to think, that some that say they are haunted by the sight and the voice of such as seem to them to be deceased persons, are rather haunted by their own consciences, which strongly represent those persons to their imaginations.

But on the other side, it is a great delight to me to think of the good which I received from many that are now in heaven; of the profitable sermons which I have heard from some, and the profitable conversations which I have had with others; how oft we sweetly consulted together of the things which concern everlasting life; how many days, in public and private, we spent in preparation, and in some prospect of the blessedness which now they ex-

joy! And it is not a small mercy to me, that I can think of the multitudes now in heaven, of whose conversion and salvation God hath made my weak endeavors a prosperous means. O, what a mercy is it to think on, that while I am yet compassed with temptations, and languishing in weakness, and groaning in pain, and, worst of all, burdened with a dark and sinful soul, so many are past all this with Christ, by means of any help which he sent them by my labors! It hath oft humbled me greatly to read, in the lives of such men as John Janeway and Joseph Allen, how much of their proficiency they ascribed to my writings, and how far they overwent me, and left me quite behind them in holy delights and praises of God. But how much more am I below a multitude now in heaven, who called me father here on earth!

And if here I must rejoice with them that rejoice, as well as mourn with them that mourn, why should I not much more rejoice with all the blessed society above; and more familiarly with my old acquaintance, pupils, and dear friends? My love should be most to the best; and therefore more to them than to any other of my friends; and, therefore, my union with them being closer, and their felicity far greater, I should think with more joy of them than of any left behind. They are safe in the harbor, past all our dangerous storms and waves; and though they know, or will know, more of my sins than they did on earth, and hate them more, yet they that feel the comfort of the pardon of their own, will imitate God in pardoning me, and rejoice in God's forgiveness of me. Though their vile bodies lie like common dust, how much better do they now know the love of God, the mysteries of grace, the heavenly glory, the state of spirits in the city of God, than I do, who was wont to preach it to them! God, that sent down Moses and Elias, to show that saints in heaven and on earth have communion, will bring me and my friends, now in heaven, together again, into a far sweeter communion than ever we had here.

26. It is no great wonder that Peter should be transported with this glorious sight; and greatly delighted with this heavenly communion, and say, "Master, it is good for us to be here." Would not a sight, a glimpse of heaven, have transported any holy soul; yea, even those that now lie in tears and fears, and are overwhelmed with doubts and troubles? When they are groping after God, and groaning on their knees, because they feel more of his frowns than of his love, if then they had such a sight as this, what a change would it make upon them! Perhaps you will say, that the doubt of their own sincerity might still deprive them of their joy. No; this sight would banish doubts and troubles. It is a communication of love, and such as will fully convince the communicants.

Without such a miraculous glimpse of glory, God sometime giveth some of his servants such a mental illustration, and inward glimpse and taste of heaven, as greatly overcometh all the fears of pain and death: such many old and later martyrs have had. It was a strange word of the godly Bishop of St. David's, Mr. Farrar, to his neighbors, 'If I stir in the fire, believe not my doctrine;' and, accordingly, he stirred not. If he had not had some prophetic inspiration, this could not have been justified from being a presumptuous tempting of God. And Mr. Baynam's case was a mere wonder, who, in the flames, called to the Papists to see a miracle, professing to them, that in the fire he felt no more pain than if he had been laid on a bed of down, or roses.

I am just now reading in Melch. Adam's *Lives of the German Philosophers*, the *Life of Olympia Fulvia Morata*, which ended with some such experience. In many ages, there hath been some one rare woman, who hath excelled men in the languages, philosophy, and other human learning. Such an one was this Olympia Fulvia Morata, of Ferrara. She married Andr. Gundler, a physician: she removed with him into Germany; and was, by the way, convinced of the guard of angels, by her young brother falling out of a high window, on cragged stones, without any more hurt than if it had been on the soft ground. In Germany, she thus wrote to Anna, Estensis, a Guisian princess: 'As soon as, by the singular goodness of God, I was departed from the Italian idolatry, and came with my husband into Germany, it is incredible how God changed my soul, (or mind,) which being formerly most averse (or abhorring) to the divine Scriptures, am now delighted in them alone, and place in them all my study, labor, care, and mind; and, as much as possible, contemn all the riches, honors, and pleasures, which formerly I was wont to admire.' But the cross presently following, in God's usual method, her husband and she were, by soldiers, stripped naked, save the shift next the body, and narrowly escaping with life, were put so to wander from place to place, none daring to entertain them, even when she was sick of a fever; till at last they found liberal entertainment, in which she shortly fell into a mortal disease, of which she died. And, in her last sickness, and after much torment of body, near death, she pleasantly smiled. Her husband asked her the cause; who said, 'I saw a certain place which was full of a most clear and beauteous light;' intimating that she should quickly be there, and saying, 'I am wholly full of joy.' And spake no more till, her eye-sight failing her, she said, 'I scarce know any of you any more; but all things else about seem to be full of most beauteous flowers;' which were her last words; having a long time professed, that nothing seemed

more desirable to her, than to be dissolved, and so be with Christ ; in all her sickness magnifying his mercies to her.

Many have thus joyfully laid down the flesh to go to Christ : what wonder, then, if Peter was loath to lose the pleasure of what he saw !

Two things are necessary to great and solid joy ; first, that the object be truly and greatly amiable and delectable ; and, secondly, that the apprehensions of it be clear and strong. As to the first, we have so great and glorious things to delight us as would feast our souls with constant joy, were not the second, alas ! much wanting. What man could choose but be even in Peter's rapture continually, if he had but ascertained heavenly glory, apprehended by him in as satisfactory a manner as these sensible things are ? If I lay in prison, yea, or in torment of colic, stone, or any such disease, and had but, withal, such apprehensions, or sight of assured glory, surely the pain would not be able to suppress my joy. What a mixture, what a discord would there be in my expressions ! torment would constrain my flesh to groan, and the sight of heaven would make me triumph. I cannot but think how this great discord would show the difference between the spirit and the flesh. What a strange thing it would be to hear the same man, at the same time, crying out in pain, with groans, and magnifying the love of God with transporting joy ! But we are not yet fit for such joyful apprehensions : our weak eyes must not see the sun, but through the allaying medium of a humid air, at a vast distance, and by the crystalline humor and organical parts of the eye. Fain we would get nearer, and have sight, or clearer apprehensions, of the spiritual society and glorious world. We study, we pray, we look up, we groan under our distance, darkness, and unsatisfying conceptions ; but yet it must not be ; we must be ripened before the shell will break, or the dark womb will deliver us up to the glorious light. But Christ vouchsafed that to his three apostles, which we are unworthy of, and yet unfit for. O, happy sight ! O, happy men ! It is incongruous to say, ' What would I not give for such a sight ! ' lest it should savor of Simon Magus' folly ; and I have nothing to give ; but it is not incongruous to say, ' What would I not do, and what would I not suffer, for such a sight ? ' Yea, Christ puts such kind of questions to us : O that I had better answered them in the hour of duty, and in the hour of temptation ! When he asked, " Can ye drink of the cup that I drink of, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with ? " I have been ready, with James and John, to say, I can ; but when the trial comes, (as they after, in his suffering, forsook him and fled,) how insufficient is my own strength to perform my promise ! When he did impose on me the denying of myself,

forsaking all, taking up the cross and following him, I yielded, and covenanted by vow to do it; but it was by the help of the Holy Spirit, which he promised to give me. I stand, Lord, to my covenant; help me to perform it; and give me, though not his present sight, yet some of Peter's mental apprehensions, and a glimpse, a taste, of that which transported him with delight. Let who will (or who thou wilt) take the riches and grandeur of the world. O, give me some delightful taste of that which I am made for, re-deemed for, and which thy Spirit hath long taught me to seek and hope for, as my all!

27. Peter was not weary with the sight of this heavenly apparition. Why should I be weary of the believing contemplation of greater things? Though sight affect us more sensibly than mere believing and thinking, yet these have their happy office, which may be effectual. And Christ, who thus appeared in glory to Peter, hath said, "Blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed." And Peter himself saith of them that see not Christ, that "They rejoice with joy unspeakable, and full of glory," in believing. O, how unexcusable am I for every weary prayer or meditation of such a glory; and for yielding to Satan and a backward heart, which have oft made me shorten these sweet employments, when I had time, and leave, and need, to lengthen them! What! weary of communion with Christ! weary of speaking to my heavenly Father, for endless blessedness, upon such joyful terms of hope as he hath given me! weary of the thoughts of the city of God, the heavenly society and work! weary of exciting divine love, and exercising it in divine praise, which are the works of angels, and all the heavenly host! O, how justly might God be, as it were, weary of me, and of my weary services; yea, of the best that I can offer him, which hath in it so much to give him cause!

28. Peter did not fly from this glorious prospect; but would fain have had more of it, and have dwelt upon the holy mount. And when God will call me to a more glorious vision and fruition in heaven, shall I draw back and be unwilling to go? Was that mount a better place than heaven? Is not Christ now to be there seen in greater glory? Is the Jerusalem above, the glorious company of saints and angels, no better, and more desirable a sight, than Moses and Elias were on the mount? Alas! when we have read, and heard, and thought, and talked so much of heaven, and done and suffered so much for it, that yet we should draw back with fear and unwillingness to go to it! O, what lamentable weakness of faith, and power of flesh, doth this discover! When I read Peter's words, "It is good to be here," I am grieved that I, who dwell in a world so near like hell, among the implacable

haters of holiness and holy peace, and in a painful, tired body, and who have thought, said, and written so much of heaven, do yet say, with no stronger desire and joy, "It is good to be there." When I see all natural appetites desire earnestly their proper food, and even the brutes desire their beloved company, shall my holy appetite be so dull and indifferent? Lord, quicken it by the fuller communications of thy Spirit, and save me from this hated, dangerous disease.

29. But Peter spake he knew not what, when he talked of building tabernacles on earth, for the fruition of that which is proper to heaven. Alas! this is our common malady and folly: we would have Christ in the splendor of his glory; but we would have him here: we would see Moses and Elias, if they will come down to us: we would have that in the flesh, which flesh and blood cannot possess. O, if we knew in what land, what city, what country, what private house, we might live in the least glimpse of the heavenly glory, how joyfully should we run to such an habitation! Merchants make towards the most gainful place for trade: poor men inquire after the most fertile and delectable countries for plantation: gentlemen delight themselves with a sweet and pleasantly-seated mansion; but if saints on earth could find a place where they could see what Stephen, or Paul, or the apostles saw, and have a little of heaven without dying or putting off this body, what a desirable dwelling would that seem to them! And yet, alas! how cold are our desires of the time and place where we shall have much more! We have Christ on earth, in the manner and measure that we are capable: we have here some communion with heaven, as verily (though not so sensibly) as our eye hath with the sun. God will not deny believers their title, their earnest, and some first-fruits; but when we would have our all, or our best on earth, or that on earth which is proper to heaven, we know not what we desire or say.

Are we, vile, dirty sinners in flesh, now fit for heavenly sights or joys? Or is this world a place for building tabernacles, where we may see the Lord, and take up our rest? What! in a world of temptations, of wickedness, of sufferings, where we are daily wrestling for our lives, and fighting, not merely against flesh and blood, but against principalities and powers, and the rulers of the darkness of this world, even spiritual wickedness (or wicked spirits) in high places; (above the greatest men that are their servants.) Eph. vi. 12. But that which is of the earth is earthly. Our earthly part would have an earthly felicity; but when we know that it is corruptible, and a dying thing, and that we have here no continuing city, both faith and reason bid us seek for one to come. The unfaithful steward had so much wit as to make sure of an-

other habitation, when he knew that he must be no longer steward.

God hath so constantly confuted and befooled me, by his marvelous providence, whenever I have said, 'Soul, take thy ease,' and have thought of building tabernacles on earth, as hath convinced me, that such folly is not the least part of the danger of a soul, from which his mercy did so watchfully save me. If a little health and ease, or a pleasant habitation, or beloved company and friends, have but flattered me into earthly delight and hopes, and made me say, "It is good to be here;" I never was long without some pains, and dangerous sickness, or some loss or cross in friends, or some removal by personal or public changes, to tell me, that I knew not what I said, and that rest and happiness are not here. As the laborious ants and bees are long gathering a heap of treasure, and furnishing a hive with winter provisions, and a contemptuous foot soon spurneth about the one, and the chief owner of the hive destroyeth the other; so (while I neglected wealth and honor) when I have but treasured up the choicest books, and taken pleasure in my works and friends, God saw that such pleasures needed an allay, and hath taken away books and friends together, or driven me oft from them and my habitation, to tell me, sensibly, that I have higher to look, and further to go; and that Moses and Elias appeared not to turn earth into heaven, and make me think that now I am well, but to invite my soul to their celestial habitation. When Christ hath comforted me by hearing prayers, by great deliverances, by wonderful success of my defective labors, by comfortable friends, by public mercies, it was not, by making my condition pleasant, to keep down my desires from heaven, but to draw them thither by such foretastes. Contentment with our condition, as without more of the world, is a great duty; but to be content with the world, or any thing on earth, without more holiness and communion with God, and without a part in the heavenly perfection, is a heinous and pernicious sin.

But, alas! it is a far worse mistake than Peter's, which deceiveth the greatest part of men. They say, indeed, as he, "It is good to be here," (till melancholy or misery make them intolerable to themselves;) but it is not because they have seen a glimpse of heaven on earth, or tasted the sweetness of the holy society and work, but because their bodies are in health, their purses full, their appetites pleased, and their inferiors do their wills and honor them. This is all the heaven that they love; and to leave all this is the death which they abhor and fear. And they will not hear God and the experience of all mankind befooling them, till near the night that their souls shall be required; and then, whose will all their treasure be?

30. But yet it was a greater part of Peter's dotage, to think of

tabernacles for Christ, Moses, and Elias, and of detaining of heavenly inhabitants upon earth. If you would offer the lowest saint in heaven an earthly kingdom in exchange for his condition, with what disdain would he despise the offer! Christ's kingdom was not of this world, nor would Moses and Elias change their lot with Alexander or Cæsar. Poor trifles allure us, and seem somewhat to us (as toys to children) while we are dreaming in the flesh; but if once we be delivered, and see what the celestial glory is, what a change will it make upon our judgments? We fear now in the dark to go unto that world of light, and are loath to put off the rags of flesh, and to depart from a known, though a dirty, falling habitation; but if we get to heaven, we shall be loath to return to earth again, and be so coarsely clothed: when once we are there, a world would not hire us to come back into this corruptible body, till God will make it spiritual and incorruptible. Our friends, whose deaths we passionately lamented, would be loath now to change their company for such as we are, or their abode for such a wicked world as this, or their work for the best of ours on earth. No wonder that departed souls appear not to their friends on earth: most apparitions are of devils, or miserable souls, to whom it is no loss or condescension. Were I once in heaven, could I possibly be willing to be turned again into a Bedlam world, and laid under the feet of blinded pride, and raging madness, and live among Sodomites (called Christians) whose God is their belly, and who glory in their filthiness and shame, and mind nothing, with love, but earthly things, and are bitter enemies, not only to the cross, but to the government of Christ? Would I be again among dogs and swine; yea, devils in the flesh, who hate and persecute the regenerate seed, and all that will not receive the mark, and be as mad and bad as they? Would I again be groaning here in pain, or tired with a weary body, and more with a feeble, sinful soul, weak in faith, cold in love, of doubtful hope, and imperfect duty? Would I be here again in the prospect of a grave, with fear of dying; as strange as now to the heavenly felicity? Lazarus will not come from Abraham's bosom, for the rich man's wealth and belly-pleasure; no, not to warn his sensual brethren. Had Peter seen heaven as he saw the glory on the mount, he would never have made so blind a motion for Christ, Moses, and Elias, to continue there, who have so much better a habitation.

31. But this glorious apparition was but short; as the glory of God's back parts to Moses, which did but pass by. Presently a cloud cometh, and separateth the company, and ends the pleasant sight. When Christians receive some extraordinary sense of the love of God, some sweet foretastes of promised happiness, they

must not look that this should be ordinary, or always so. When some fervent prayer is extraordinarily answered, and a sacrament sweetened with drops of heavenly sweetness, or a holy discourse or meditation hath raised us higher than ever before, we must not expect that this should be our constant diet, and God should thus feast us all the year. The times of fasting also have their turn. Moses did not dwell on Mount Horeb, nor Mount Nebo or Pisgah, from whence he saw the Land of Promise. God's children do not always laugh and sing: while they have their sinning times, they will have their suffering and crying times. How suddenly doth the lark come down to the earth, who before was soaring out of sight, and singing pleasantly in the higher air, as if it had been aspiring towards the sun! A luscious diet is not best for such as we, that have so many corruptions to be cured by cleansing means: cordials must not be all our physic: unwarrantable expectations of greater or more continued joys than we are meet for, is injurious both to God and to ourselves. Desires of more we may and must have; but those desires must look up to heaven, where, indeed, they may be satisfied.

32. The joy of these spectators was turned into fear (saith the text) when they entered into the cloud. No wonder: the change was sudden and great; from a sight of the kingdom of God in power, unto a dark cloud. Just now they seemed almost in heaven, and presently they knew not where they were; from glorious light to a kind of prison of obscurity.

Such changes here we are liable to. The same soul that lately tasted of transporting joy, may lie in terror, hardly resisting temptations to despair. The same person that was confident of the love of God may be quickly not only doubting of it, but sinfully denying it: the same that had assuring evidence of sincerity may shortly conclude that all was but hypocrisy. The same that was triumphing in the sense of love, may cry out, O miserable man that I am! And as the same that magnified the grace of Christ, may say, the day of grace is past; especially if either the tempter get the advantage of a melancholy body, or of casting the soul into renewed guilt of some wounding sin, or into impatient discontents, with the things that befall it in the world.

There is a stability in the essentials of holiness: it is life eternal that is here begun: but, alas! the degrees of grace, the exercise of it, the evenness and integrity of our obedience, and accordingly our comforts, are lamentably liable to change; even as all worldly things are mutable to the ungodly, though their hardened hearts are too little changeable. Expecting nothing but joy from God, or expecting more than we are meet for, maketh our dejections the greater, and more grievous. None are cast lower with terror,

trouble, and almost despair, than some that have been most transported with joy; when some other Christians, of an even conversation, have an evenness and constancy of holy peace, though no such joys.

33. The cloud separated the company: Moses and Elias are seen no more; no, nor the glory of Christ: but yet Christ is not separated from them; his ordinary presence still abideth with them. Christ doth not leave the soul when extraordinary joys do leave it: it loseth not his saving grace, nor the presence of his Spirit, as oft as it loseth heavenly delight. Desire showeth love to him, and to his holiness; and he never forsaketh those that love him. As long as the soul breatheth after Christ, and after more communion with God, and, conscious of its imperfection, would fain be perfect, and resolveth to continue waiting for increase of faith and holiness in the use of the means which Christ hath appointed, it is not forsaken. Christ, by his Spirit, dwelleth and worketh in that soul. It may enter into a cloud, and Christ may be unseen, and seem quite lost, but the cloud will vanish, and he will appear; and he will first find us, that we may seek and find him. If he appear to us but as in his humiliation, and as crucified, and thereby humble us, and crucify us to the world and the flesh, with the affections and lusts thereof, and cause us but to seek first his kingdom and righteousness, he will raise us higher, and show us his glory, when grace, and conquest, and perseverance have prepared us. We are in a cloudy world and body; and our sins are yet a thicker cloud between God's glorious face and us: but as God is God, and heaven is heaven, so Christ is Christ, and grace is grace, when we see it not, but fear that we are undone, and entering into outer darkness; and at sun-rising, all our darkness, and all our doubts and fears, will vanish.

34. "There came a voice out of the cloud, This is my beloved Son; hear him;" Luke ix. 35. Had I heard such a testimony from heaven, would it not have set my faith above all doubts and unbelief? For the voice that thus owned Christ and his word, might imbolden me fully to trust all his promises, as it bindeth me to obey his precepts.

God's love is effective and communicative; and as his life and light cause life and light, so his love causeth love; and Christ, that is called his beloved Son, is likest him in love. None loveth us so much as God our Father, and his beloved Son, who is also, as God, essential love. And shall I think with cold or little love of such a God, and such a Savior? It is as unreasonable to fly from God or Christ, as fearing that he wanteth love to a capable soul, as to fly from the sun as wanting heat or light. O, what an unruly, froward thing is the corrupted soul of man! When

we think of God's judgment, and how we are in his hands, as to all our hopes, for soul and body, we fear, and are uncomfortable, lest he have not so much love and mercy as should cause us confidently to trust him. We could trust some friends with life and soul, were we in their power; but infinite love itself, and a loving Savior, we can hardly trust, so far as to quiet us in pain or death. And yet when Christ, to cure this distrust, hath manifested his love by the greatest miracles that ever God showed to mortal men, even by Christ's incarnation, his life, his works, his death, his resurrection, intercession, and the advancement of human nature in him above angels, the greatness of this incomprehensible love occasioneth the difficulty of our believing it; as if it were too great and wonderful to be credible: thus dark and guilty sinners hardly believe our Father's love, whether it be expressed by ordinary or by the most wonderful effects.

35. As Christ is called the Son of God, so also are all his members: we have so far the same title, that we might partake of the same comforts: he is God's only Son, by eternal generation and the hypostatical union upon his miraculous conception: but through him we are sons by regeneration and adoption. And shall not the love of such a Father be trusted, and the presence and pleasing of such a Father be desired? If Manoah's wife could say, "If he would have killed us, he would not have accepted a sacrifice of us;" I may say, if he would have damned me, or forsaken my departing soul, he would not have adopted me, nor made and called me his son. Christ was made his incarnate Son, that we might be made his adopted sons: and we are made his adopted sons, for the sake, and by the grace, of Christ, his natural Son.

36. The command, "hear him," is relative, as to Moses and Elias: 1. Hear him whom the law and the prophets typified and foretold, and were his servants, and preparatory instructors, to lead us to him. 2. Hear him before Moses and the prophets, where his coming and covenant abrogateth the law of Moses, and as a greater light, he obscureth the less: he hath revealed more than they revealed; and the same more clearly: life and immortality is more fully brought to light by him: his gospel is as the heart of the Holy Bible: we use the Old Testament books, especially as the witnesses of Christ.

37. And whom shall we hear so willingly, so obediently, as Christ? Abraham sent not Dives's brethren to the king, or to the high-priest, to know what religion he should choose, or what he should do to escape hell torments; but it was Moses and the prophets that they must hear. But God, from heaven, hath sent us yet a better teacher, and commanded us to hear him. *Moses*

was faithful in God's house as a servant, but Christ as a Son: his authority is above kings and high priests; and they have no power now but from him, and therefore none against him or his laws: all commands are null to conscience, which contradict him. The examples in Daniel iii. and vi., and of the apostles, tell us whether God or man should be first obeyed: therefore it is that the Bible is more necessary to be searched and learned than the statute-book, or canons. Were man to be heard before Christ, or against him, or as necessarily as he, why have we not law-preachers every Lord's-day to expound the statutes and canons to all the people? And why are they not catechised out of the book of canons, or law, as well as out of the Bible?

And sure, if we must hear Christ and his gospel before priests or princes, or before our dearest friends, much more before our fleshly lusts and appetites, and before a profane and foolish scorner, and before the temptations of the devil. O, had we heard Christ warning us, when we hearkened to the tempter, and to the flesh, how safely had we lived, and how comfortably might we have died!

38. But this word, "hear him," is as comfortable as obligatory. Hear him, sinner, when he calls to thee to repent and turn to God: hear him, when he calleth thee to himself, to take him for thy Lord and Savior, to believe and trust him for pardon and salvation: hear him, when he calleth, "Come to me, all ye that are weary and heavy laden: ho, every one that thirsteth, come: whoever will, let him drink of the water of life freely." Hear him when he commandeth, and hear him when he promiseth; and hear him before the worldly wise, when he teacheth us the way to God: hear him, for he knows what he saith: hear him, for he is true, and faithful, and infallible: hear him, for he is the Son of God, the greatest messenger that ever God sent: hear him, for he purposely came down in flesh, that he might familiarly teach us: hear him, for none else in the world hath made known the things of God like him, and none can do it: hear him, for he meaneth us no hurt; he is our dearest friend, and love itself, and saith nothing but for our salvation, and promiseth nothing but what he will perform. Yea, hear him, for every soul that will not hear him shall be cut off.

Hear him, therefore, if he contradict thy fleshly appetite; hear him, if great or small, if any or all shall be against it: hear him, if he set thee on the hardest work, or call thee to the greatest suffering: hear him, if he bid thee take up the cross, and forsake all and follow him, in hope of a reward in heaven: hear him, if he call thee to lay down thy life; for none can be a loser by him.

Hear him now in the day of grace, and he will hear thee in the

day of thy extremity, in the day of danger, sickness, death, and judgment, when the world forsaketh thee, and no one's hearing else can help thee.

39. But 'I was not one that saw this vision: had I seen it myself, it would have satisfied me, and confuted all my doubts.'

Ans. But it is the will of God that the ministry and testimony of men shall be a means of our believing: it is faith, and not sight, that must be the ordinary way of our salvation; else Christ must have showed himself, and his miracles, resurrection, and ascension, to every one in the world that must believe in him: and then he must have been visible at once in every kingdom, parish, and place on earth, and continued so to the end of the world; and must have died, risen, and ascended, many millions of times, and in every place. They that will put such laws on their lawgiver before they will believe in him, must be saved without him and against him if they can. This is more unreasonable than to tell God that you will not believe that there is a heaven or hell unless you see them. But God will have us live and be saved by believing, and not by sight. And he will use man for the instruction and salvation of man, and not send angels with every message.

40. But why did Christ show this vision but to three of his disciples? *Ans.* He is not bound to tell us why: but we may know that a sight of heavenly glory is not to be ordinarily expected on earth. Why did God show the back parts of his glory to none but Moses; no, not to his brother Aaron? Why did he speak to him only in the bush and on the mount? Why did he translate none to heaven without dying but Enoch and Elias? Why did he save but Noah, and seven with him, in the ark? These are not things ordinary, nor to be common to many.

41. But by this it appeareth, that even among his twelve apostles Christ made a difference, and preferred some before the rest; though he set no one over the rest in any governing authority, yet some of them were qualified above the rest, and esteemed and used by him accordingly. Peter is called the first, and, it seems, was qualified above the rest, by his more frequent speaking and familiarity with Christ, and his speeches and miracles after the resurrection; though yet the faction that said, "I am of Cephas," or, "I am of Paul," was rebuked as carnal. So far was Christ from directing the churches to end all difference by obeying Peter as their supreme ruler. James and John are called the sons of thunder: they had some more eminent qualification than the rest; so that James was the first martyred apostle, and John the disciple whom Jesus specially loved. Ministers of the same office and order may much differ in gifts and grace, in labor and success, and in God's acceptance and reward, and in the church's just esteem and love.

All pastors were not such as Cyprian, Basil, Gregory Nazianzen, Chrysostom, or Augustin. And the rest must not envy at the preference of Peter, James, and John. Andrew seems to be Peter's elder brother, and knew Christ before him; as Aaron was elder brother to Moses, and yet must give God leave to choose to give preëminence to whom he will.

42. But why did not these three apostles tell any of this vision till after Christ's resurrection? *Ans.* Christ did forbid it them. And it is according to the method of his revelation. He would make himself known to the world by degrees; and more by his works than by mere words; and these works were to be finished, and all set together, to be his convincing witness to the world. And the chief of these were his resurrection, ascension, and sending down the Holy Ghost; the apostles could not say till then, 'Jesus is risen, ascended, and hath given us the seal of the Spirit; therefore he is the Son of God.' Christ first preached repentance, like John Baptist; and next he told them that the kingdom of God (by the Messiah) has come, and was among them; and then he taught them to believe his word to be sent from God, and to be true; and he taught them the doctrines of holiness, love and righteousness towards men: and he wrought those miracles which might convince them that what he said, or should say, deserved their belief; but yet, before his resurrection, his apostles themselves understood not many of the articles of our creed: they knew not that Christ was to die for sin, and so to redeem the world by his sacrifice, nor that he was to rise, ascend, and reign, and intercede in glory; and yet they were then in a state of grace and life, such as believers were in before Christ's incarnation. And sure no more is required of the nations that cannot hear the gospel.

But the resurrection was the beginning of the proper gospel state, and kingdom, to which all before was but preparatory; and then, by the Spirit, Christianity was formed to its settled consistence, and is a known, unalterable thing.

And it is a great confirmation to our faith, that Christ's kingdom was not settled by any advantage of his personal presence, preaching, and persuasion, so much as by the Holy Ghost in his apostles and disciples, when he has gone from them into heaven.

43. But how are we sure that these three men tell us nothing but the truth? *Ans.* This is oft answered elsewhere. The Spirit which they spake and worked by, was Christ's witness and theirs. They healed the sick, raised the dead, spake various languages which they never learned; and preached and recorded that holy doctrine committed to them by Christ, which itself continued the evidence of its divinity, and of their truth; and Christ

then and to this day hath owned it, by the sanctifying efficacy of the same Spirit, upon millions of souls.

How holy a doctrine hath Peter himself delivered, as confirmed by his apparition! "We have not followed cunningly-devised fables, when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eye-witnesses of his majesty; for he received from God, the Father, honor and glory, when there came such a voice to him from the excellent glory, 'This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased'; and this voice, which came from heaven, we heard when we were with him in the holy mount;" 2 Peter i. 16—18. The words "in whom I am well pleased" are only here and in Matthew; Mark and Luke, omitting them, tell us that the evangelists undertook not to recite all that was said and done, but each one so much as seemed necessary for him to say.

44. And now what remaineth, O my soul, but that thou take in the due impression of this apparition of the glory of Jesus and his saints; and that thou joyfully obey this heavenly voice, and hear the beloved Son of God, in whom the Father is well pleased?

I. As we that are born in another age and land must know what Christ said by the transmission and certain testimony of them that heard him, infallible tradition, by act, word, and record, being our way of notice, as immediate sensation was theirs, so even the glorious apparition itself may, by the mediation of their infallible record, be partly transmitted to our imagination. An incorporate soul is so used to a mixed way of knowing by imagined ideas received by sense, that it would fain have such a sort of knowledge of separated souls, and other spirits, and of their glorious state, and place, and work, and is hardly fully satisfied without it. Seeing Christ hath partly condescended to this our culpable weakness, lose not the help of his condescension. Let this clear description of the heavenly sight make it to thee partly as if thou hadst been one of the three spectators; till thou canst say, 'Methinks I almost see the face of Christ shine as the sun, and his raiment whiter than the snow; and Moses and Elias (no doubt in some degree of glory) standing with him:' methinks I almost hear them discoursing of Christ's death and man's redemption; and by this sight I partly conceive of the unseen heavenly company and state: methinks I see the cloud receive them, when Peter had been transported with the sight; and I almost feel his pleasant raptures, and am ready to say, as if I had been with him, "It is good for us to be here:" methinks I almost hear the heavenly voice, "This is my beloved Son, hear him." And shall I yet doubt of the celestial society and glory? Had I once seen that, what a sense would it have left upon my heart, of the difference between earth and heav-

en, man and God, flesh and spirit, sin and duty! How thankfully should I have thought of the work of redemption and sanctification!

And why may I not accordingly put myself as into the case of them who saw all Christ's miracles, and saw him risen, and ascend towards heaven? or at least of all those ordinary Christians who saw all the wonders done by the reporters of these things? I can easily receive a pleasing idea of some foreign, happy country, which a traveler describeth to me, though I never saw it; and my reason can partly gather what great things are, if I see but lesser of the same kind, or somewhat like them. A candle sheweth somewhat by which we may conceive of the greatest flame. Even grace and gracious actions do somewhat notify to us the state of glory; but the sight on the mount did more sensibly notify it.

Think not, then, that heavenly contemplation is an impossible thing, or a mere dream, as if it had no conceivable subject-matter to work upon: the visible things of earth are the shadows, the cobwebs, the bubbles, the shows, mummeries, and masks; and it is loving them, and rejoicing and trusting in them, that is the dream and dotage. Our heavenly thoughts, and hopes, and business, are more in comparison of these than the sun is to a glow-worm, or the world to a mole-hill, or governing an empire to the motions of a fly. And can I make somewhat, yea, too much, of these almost nothings; and yet shall I make almost nothing of the active, glorious, unseen world; and doubt and grope in my meditations of it, as if I had no substance to apprehend? If invisibility to mortals were a cause of doubting, or of unaffecting, unsatisfying thoughts, God himself, who is all to men and angels, would be as no God to us, and heaven as no heaven, and Christ as no Christ, and our souls, which are ourselves, would seem as nothing to themselves; and all men would be as no men to us, and we should converse only with carcasses and clothes.

Lord, shine into this soul with such an heavenly, potent, quickening light, as may give me more lively and powerful conceptions of that which is all my hope and life! Leave me not to the exercise of art alone, in barren notions; but make it as natural to me to love thee, and breathe after thee. Thou teachest the young ones, both of men and brutes, to seek to the dam for food and shelter; and though grace be not a brutish principle, but works by reason, it hath its nature and inclining force, and tendeth towards its original, as its end. Let not my soul be destitute of that holy sense and appetite, which the divine and heavenly nature doth contain. Let me not lay more stress and trust upon my own sight and sense than on the sight and fidelity of my God, and my Re-

deemer. I am not so foolish as to live as if this earth were no bigger than the little of it which I see: let me not be so much more foolish as to think of the vast and glorious regions, and the blessed inhabitants thereof, and the receptacles of justified souls, as if they wanted either substantiality or certainty, to exercise a heavenly conversation here, and to feast believing souls with joy, and draw forth well-grounded and earnest desire to "depart and be with Christ."

II. Hear, then, and hear with trust and joy, the tidings and promises of him whom the voice from heaven commanded man to hear. He is the glorified Lord of heaven and earth: all is in his power. He hath told us nothing but what he knew, and promised nothing but what he is able and willing to give. Two sorts of things he hath required us to trust him for; things notified by express, particular promises, and things only generally promised and known to us.

We may know particularly that he will receive our departing souls, and justify them in judgment, and raise the dead, and all the rest particularly promised. And we know, in general, that we have a heavenly city and inheritance, and shall see God, and be with Christ in everlasting happiness, loving and praising God with joy in the perfected, glorious church of Christ. All this, therefore, we must explicitly believe. But it is little that we know distinctly of the consistence and operations of spirits and separated souls, as to a formal or modal conception: a great deal about the place, state, and mode, their acting, and fruition, is dark to us; but none of it is dark to Christ: here, therefore, an implicit trust should not only bind and stop our selfish and over-bold inquiries, but also quiet and comfort the soul, as well as if ourselves knew all.

O my soul, abhor and mortify thy selfish trust, and unbelieving thirst to have that knowledge of good and evil thyself, which is the prerogative of thy Lord and Savior. This was the sin that first defiled human nature, and brought calamity on the world. God hath set thee enough to learn; know that, and thou knowest enough. If more were possible, it would be a perplexity and a snare, and he that increaseth such knowledge would increase sorrow; but when it is both unprofitable and impossible, what a sin and folly it is to waste our time, and tire and deceive our minds, in long and troublesome searches after it, and then disquietly to murmur at God, and the Holy Scripture, and die with sad, distrustful fears, because we attain it not; when all this while we should have understood, that this part of knowledge belongs to Christ, and the heavenly society, and not to sinful mortals here; and that we have without it as much as may cause us to live and die in ho-

liness, safety, peace and joy, if we can but trust him who knoweth for us! Christ perfectly knoweth what spirits are, and how they act, and whether they have any corporeal organ, or vehicle, or none; and what is the difference between Enoch and Elias, and those that left their bodies here, and what a resurrection will add to souls, and how it will be wrought, and when; and what is meant by the thousand years' previous reign; and who they be that shall dwell in the new earth, and how it will be renewed. All the dark passages of Scripture and Providence he can perfectly resolve: he knoweth why God leaveth the far greatest part of the world in Satan's slavery, darkness, and wickedness, and chooseth so few to real holiness; and why he maketh not men such as he commandeth them to be; and why he leaveth serious Christians to so much weakness, error, scandal, and division. These, and all other difficulties, are fully known to Christ. And it is not the child, but the father, that must know what food and clothing he should have, and the physician that must know what are the ingredients of his medicines, and why.

Lord, open my eyes, then, to see what thou hast revealed; and help me willingly to shut them to the rest; and to believe and trust in thee for both; not to stagger at thy sealed promises, nor selfishly to desire particular knowledge, which belongs not to me, as if I could trust myself, and my own knowledge, and not thine. Lord, teach me to follow thee, even in the dark, as quietly and confidently as in the light (having the general light of thy promise of felicity.) I knew not the mystery of thy conception, incarnation, or the way of the workings of thy Spirit on souls. No wonder if much of the resurrection and unseen world be above my reach; much more that thy infinite majesty is incomprehensible to me: how little do the brutes that see me know of my thoughts or me! I have no adequate knowledge of any one thing in the world, but somewhat of it is unknown. O, blessed be that love and grace that has given me a glorified Head in heaven, to know all for me which I know not: hear and trust him, living and departing, O my soul! who hath told thee that we shall be with him where he is, and shall behold his glory; and that a crown of salvation is laid up for us, and we shall reign with him, when we have conquered and suffered with him, and hath bid us live in joyful hope of our exceeding, eternal, heavenly reward, and at our death to commend our spirits into his hand: receive us, Lord, according to thy promises. Amen.

SHORT MEDITATIONS

ON

ROMANS v. 1—5.

OF THE

SHEDDING ABROAD GOD'S LOVE ON THE HEART BY THE
HOLY GHOST.

EXPERIENCE of the want of this effusion of God's love, and some small taste of its sweetness, make me think the thoughts of this very suitable to one expecting death.

The words contain a golden chain of highest blessings on all true Christians.

I. They are supposed to have faith, that is, both a general trust in God's revelations and grace, and a special trust in Jesus Christ, as given by the Father's love to be the Redeemer, to justify, sanctify, and glorify his people. I have oft proved this justifying faith to be no less than our unfeigned taking Christ for our Savior, and becoming true Christians, according to the tenor of the baptismal covenant. As to the acts, it is formally trust—one in three; the understanding's assenting trust, the will's consenting trust, and the executive power's practical, venturing, obeying trust.

II. All true believers are justified; even all that consent to the baptismal covenant, and choose God to be their God, and Christ to be their Savior, and the Holy Ghost to be their Sanctifier, and give up themselves to him by true resolution, as their only ruler, hope, and happiness; though this be done with so great weakness, as endeth not all doubts, nor quieteth the mind.

To be justified is not to be accounted such as have no sin, but,
1. To be made such by pardon through Christ's merits, and by true faith, as God will take by special love and favor unto life. 2. To be accounted such by God. 3. To be virtually sentenced such by the law of grace and faith, and to be just in law sense.

4. At last to be judged such by public sentence. 5. And to be used as such.

Not justified by the law of innocency, or of Moses, but by Christ's law of grace.

Not justified perfectly till the time of perfection. Much punishment on soul and body is yet to be taken off, and more sins daily to be pardoned, and we, before the world, to be sentenced as just to life everlasting.

III. The justified have peace with God. They are reconciled, and in a state of love and friendship. It signifieth mutual peace, but with great inequality. God's love and favor to us is the stable, constant part. Our consent also, and acceptance of his terms of peace, is constant in its truth; but our sense of God's love, which is the peace possessed by the soul, is weak and inconstant, and too oft quite lost or obscured by ignorance, mistake, and fear. But it must be known that this is a diseased state, unnatural to the believer as such; as it is unnatural for a woman married to a faithful husband, to lie in terror thinking that he will kill her, or doth not love her; or for a child to think the same of a loving father. Faith, of its own nature, tendeth to the soul's peace and joy, in the sense of God's love. And how is Christ offered to us, but as a Savior, to bring us by grace to glory? And he that accepteth him as such, whereby he is justified, doth sure believe that he is offered as such; for none can accept what he thinks not to be offered. And this implieth some hope, at least that Christ will be such to us: and did faith work strongly and kindly, its effect would be a constant, joyful state of soul, as pleasant health and mirth is to our natures. All our distrustful fears and griefs, and disquietness of soul, are for want of more faith, as sickness and pain is for the want of vital causes of health.

IV. This peace with God is only "through our Lord Jesus Christ." Though it be a vain dream to think by justifying faith is meant Christ only, and not faith; yet it is no other faith but the foresaid believing trust on Christ. Therefore as faith is our part, so it supposeth Christ, and all the works of his office, and righteousness, on his part, as its object. Christ is the purchasing cause; but our trust and acceptance is that which is pleasing to God, and chosen by him to be our part, without innocency or keeping the Jewish law.

Since man once sinned, God's justice and man's conscience tell us that we are unfit for God's acceptance or communion immediately, but must have a suitable Mediator. O, blessed be God for this suitable Mediator. Without him I dare not pray, I cannot hope, I dare not die; God would else frown me away to misery. All the hope of pardon and salvation that I have; all the access

to God, and the mercies and deliverances that I have received, have been by this Author and Finisher of our faith. Into his conducting hands I give my soul; and into his preserving hands both soul and body; and into his receiving hands I commend my departing soul.

V. Ver. 2. 'By whom we have access by faith unto this grace wherein we stand;' that is, into this state of blessed Christianity, peace with God, and the following blessings. As it is by marriage that a woman hath right to her husband's estate and honors, and by inheritance that a child comes to his father's maintenance and land. This is no diminution to God's love. To say it is all by Christ, is not to take it as ever the less from God the Father. It is more to give us Christ, and life in him, than to have given us life without a Christ; (John iii. 16. 1 John v. 10—12.) as God is, never the less, the giver of light to the earth, for giving it them by the sun. Second causes diminish not the honor of the first.

VI. "And rejoice in hope of the glory of God." 1. The beatifical object—"the glory of God." 2. The beatifical act—"rejoice." 3. The mediate, causing act—"hope." All presupposing faith and justification.

The "glory of God" is that glorious appearance of God to man and angels, which maketh happy, (1.) the mind by beholding it, (2.) the will by loving it, and receiving the communications of love, (3.) the executive powers by joyful praise, &c.

Though some foretastes are here, it is yet said to be hoped for; and we hope for that which is not seen. When faith is said to be that which we are justified or saved by, it includeth hope, though, more precisely taken, they are distinct. "We are saved by hope." The same word is oft translated 'trust' and 'hope;' and faith is trust. To trust Christ for salvation, includeth hoping that he will save us. But hope is denominated from the good hoped for, and faith from the cause by which we hope to obtain it.

Hope doth not necessarily imply either certainty or uncertainty. It may stand with both in various degrees.

Rejoicing is made by God the very naturally-desired state of the soul. It is, when natural, the pleasant efflorescence of the spirits, or their state of health.

It is pleasure that is the spring or poise of all motion sensitive in the world. *Trahit sua quemque voluptas*. Appetite, or will, is the active principle; and congruous good or delectable is the object. The world is undone by the seduction of false, deceitful pleasure; and though we that made not ourselves are not so made for ourselves, as that our pleasure or felicity in God should be so high in our desire as God himself, who is the ultimate object of our love; yet seeing such an object he is, and the love of him

(and received from him) is our felicity, these are never to be separated.

What have I to rejoice in, if this hoped-for glory be not my joy? All things else are dying to me; and God himself is not my felicity, as he afflicts me, nor as he giveth me the transitory gifts of nature, but as he is to be seen in glory. If this be not my joy, it is all but vanity. What, then, should all my thoughts and labor aim at more, as to myself, than to hope for and foretaste this glory? No sin lieth heavier on me than that my hopes of glory raise me to no higher joy; and that the great weakness of my faith appeareth by such dull thoughts of glory, or by withdrawing fears. Sure there is enough in the glory of God, soundly believed and hoped for, to make a man rejoice in pain and weakness, and to make him long to be with Christ. I live not according to the nature of Christianity, if I live not as in peace with God, and in the joyful hopes of promised glory.

VII. "Not only so, but we glory in tribulation." Glory is so transcendent, and tribulation so small and short, that an expectant of glory may well rejoice in bodily sufferings. It is tribulation for Christ and righteousness' sake that we are said to glory in: the rest, for our sins, it is well if we can improve and patiently bear. Yet in them we may rejoice, in hope of glory, though we glory not of them. O, if all the painful, languid days, and nights, and years, that I have had, as the fruit of my sin, had been sufferings for that which I am now hated and hunted for, even for preaching Christ when men forbid me, how joyfully might I undergo it! but yet, even here, approaching glory should be my joy. Alas! my groans and moans are too great, and my joy too little.

VIII. "Knowing that tribulation worketh patience." That which worketh patience is matter of joy; for patience doth us more good than tribulation can do hurt: why, then, do I groan so much under suffering, and so little study and exercise patience, and no more rejoice in the exercise thereof?

IX. "And patience, experience." It is manifold and profitable experience, which patient suffering brings. It giveth us experience, as of nature's weakness, and the great need of faith; so of the truth of God's promises, the love and tenderness of Christ, the acceptance of our prayers, and the power of the Spirit's aid and grace. O, what abundance of experiences of God and ourselves, and the vanity of creatures, had we wanted, if we had not waited in a suffering state; alas! how many experiences have I forgotten!

X. "And experience, hope." A bare promise should give us hope; but we are still distrustful of ourselves, and of all the clearest evidences, till experience help us and set all home. O, what

an advantage hath a Christian of great and long experience for his hope and joy ! And yet when notable experiences of God's providence are past and gone, an unbelieving heart is ready to question, whether the things came not by mere natural course ; and, like the Israelites in the wilderness, dangers and fears bear down even long and great experiences. This is my sin

XI. "And hope maketh not ashamed." That is, true hope of what God hath promised, shall never be disappointed. They that trust on deceitful creatures are deceived, and ashamed of their hope ; for all men are liars, that is, untrusty ; but God is true, and ever faithful : O, what a comfort it is that God commandeth me to trust him ! Sure such a command is a virtual promise, from him that cannot fail that trust which he commandeth. Lord, help me to trust thee in greatest dangers, and there to rest.

XII. "Because the love of God is shed abroad upon our hearts, by the Holy Ghost which is given to us." It is the love of God shed abroad on our hearts by the Holy Ghost which must make us rejoice in hope of the glory of God, even in tribulation.

Here I must consider, i. What is meant by the love of God.
ii. Why, and how it is shed abroad on the heart by the Holy Ghost.

i. By the love of God is meant the effects of his love. 1. His special grace. 2. The pleasant gust or sense of it.

God's love thus shed on the heart, presupposeth it expressed in the gospel and providence, and contains all these particulars.

1. The sanctifying of the soul by renewing grace. This is the giving of the Spirit, as he is given to all true Christians.

2. Herein the Holy Ghost makes us perceive the exceeding desirableness of the love of God, and maketh us most desire it.

3. He giveth the soul some easing hope of the love of God.

4. He quieteth the doubts, and fears, and trouble of the soul.

5. He raiseth our hopes, by degrees, to confident assurance.

6. Then the thoughts of God's love are pleasant to the soul, and give it such delight as we feel in the love and fruition of our most valued and beloved friends.

7. The soul in this state is as unapt to be jealous of God, or to question his love, as a good child or wife to question the love of a parent or husband, or to hear any that speak evil of them.

8. This, then, becomes the habitual state of the soul, in all changes, to live in the delightful sense of the love of God, as we do live in pleasure with our dearest friends.

O, blessed state, and first-fruits of heaven ! and happy are they that do attain it. And though lower degrees have their degree of happiness, yet how far short are such, in goodness, amiableness, and comfort, of those that are thus rich in grace !

THE presupposeth, 1. Knowledge of God and the gospel. 2. True belief, and hope. 3. A sincere and fruitful life. 4. Mortification as to idol, worldly vanities. 5. A conviction of our sincerity in all this. 6. A conclusion that God doth love.

But yet it is somewhat above all this. A man may have all this in his mind and mouth, and yet want this gust of effused love upon his heart. These are the way to it, but not itself.

This is the greatest good on this side heaven ; to which all wealth and honor, all fleshly pleasure and long life, all learning and knowledge, are unworthy to be once compared : briefly,

1. It is the flower and highest part of God's image on man.

2. It is the soul's true communion with God, and fruition of him, which carnal men deride ; even as our eye hath communion with the sun, and the flourishing earth enjoys its reviving heats.

3. It is that which all lower grace doth tend to, as childhood doth to manhood : and what is a world of infants, comparatively, good for ?

4. It is that which most properly answereth the design of redemption, and the wonders of God's love therein, and all the tenor of the gospel.

5. It is that which is most fully called the Spirit of God, or Christ in us : he hath lower works, but this is his great work, by which he possesseth us, as God's most pleasant habitation : " For we have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear, but the spirit of power and love, and a sound mind ; " 2 Tim. i. 7.

6. It is only that which all men, in general, desire ; I mean, the only satisfying content and pleasure that man is capable of on earth. All men would have quieting and constant pleasure ; and it is to be found in nothing else but the effused love of God.

7. It is that which will make every burden light, and all affliction easy : when the sense of God's love is still upon the soul, all pain and crosses will be but as blood-letting by the kindest physician, to save the patient's life. God will not be suspected, or grudged at, in suffering ; his love will sweeten all.

8. It will overcome abundance of temptations, which no men's wit, or learning, or knowledge of the words of Scripture will overcome. No arguments will draw a loving child, or wife, from the parents, or husband, that they know doth love them. Love is the most powerful disputant.

9. It puts a mellow, pleasant sweetness into all our duties. When we hear the word, or receive the sacrament, it is to such a soul as pleasant food to the most healthful man : when we pray, or praise God, it comes from a comforted heart, and excites and increaseth the comfort it comes from. O, who can be tack-

ward to draw near to God in prayer or meditation, who tasteth the sweetness of his love! This is religion indeed, and tells us what its life, and use, and glory is. This is the true walking with God in the best degree. When the soul liveth in the taste of his love, the heart will be still with him, and that will be its pleasure. And God most delights in such a soul.

10. This it is that putteth the sweetest relish on all our mercies. Deny God's love, and you deny them all. If you taste not his love in them, you taste little more than a beast may taste: poor food and raiment is sweet, with the sense of the love of God. Had I more of this, I should lie down, and rise, and walk, in pleasure and content. I could bear the loss of other things; and though nature will feel pains, I should have pleasure and peace in the midst of all my pains and groans. This is the white stone, the new name: no man well knoweth it who never felt it in himself.

There is no dying comfortably without this experienced taste of the love of God. This will draw up the desires of the soul: love tasted, casteth out fear: though God be holy and just, and judgment terrible, and hell intolerable, and the soul hath no distinct idea of its future state out of the body, and though we see not whither it is that we must go, the taste of God's love will make it go joyfully, as trusting him; as a child will go any whither in his father's power and hand.

But all the knowledge in the world without this quiets not a departing soul. A man may write as many books, and preach as many sermons of heaven, as I have done, and speak of it, and think of almost nothing else, and yet till the soul be sweetened and comforted with the love of God shed abroad on it by the Holy Ghost, death and the next life will be rather a man's fear than his desire. And the common fear of death which we see in the far greater part even of godly persons doth tell us, that though they may have saving desires and hopes, yet this sense of God's love on the heart is rare.

What wonder, then, if our language, our converse, our prayers, have too little savor of it, and, in comparison of joyful believers' duties, be but like green apples to the mellow ones.

My God, I feel what it is that I want, and I perceive what it is that is most desirable: O, let not guilt be so far unpardoned as to deprive my soul of this greatest good, which thou hast commended to me, and commanded, and which, in my languishing and pains, I so much need! Did I beg for wealth or honor, I might have it to the loss of others. But thy love will make me more useful to all, and none will have the less for my enjoyment; for thou, Lord, art enough for all; even as none hath the less of the sun-

light for my enjoying it. The least well-grounded hope of thy love is better than all the pleasures of the flesh ; but without some pleasant sense of it, alas ! what a withered, languishing thing is a soul ! Thy loving-kindness is better than life ; but if I taste it not, how shall I here rejoice in God, or bear my heavy burdens ?

O, let me not be a dishonor to thy family, where all have so great cause to honor thy bounty by their joy and hopes ; nor, by a sad and fearful heart, tempt men to think that thy love is not real and satisfactory. I can easily believe and admire thy greatness, and thy knowledge. Let it not be so hard to me to believe and taste thy goodness and thy love, which is as necessary to me.

If there be any thing (as surely there is) in which the divine nature and spirit of adoption consisteth, as above all the art and notions of religion, which are but like to other acquired knowledge, sure it must be this holy appetite and habitual inclination of the soul to God, by way of love, which is bred by an internal sense of his loveliness, and loving inclination to man ; which differenceth a Christian from other men, as a child differs towards his father, from strangers, or from common neighbors. Till the love of God be the very state and nature of the soul, (working here towards his honor, interests, word, and servants,) no man can say that he is God's habitation by the Spirit ; and how the heart will ever be thus habited, without believing God's love to us, it is hard to conceive.

Experience tells the world how strongly it constraineth persons to love one another, if they do but think that they are strongly beloved by one another. In the love that tends to marriage, if one that is inferior do but know that a person of far greater worth doth fervently love them, it almost puts a necessity and constraint on them for returns of love : nature can scarce choose but love in such a case. Love is the loadstone of love. A real taste of the love of God in saving souls by Christ and grace, is it that constraineth them to be holy ; that is, to be devoted to that God in love.

ii. But this must as necessarily be the work of the Holy Ghost, and can be no more done without him than the earth can be illuminated, and the vegetables live without the sun. But all the approaches of the Holy Spirit suffice not to produce this great effect, and give us the divine, holy nature.

The same sunshine hath three different effects on its objects.

1. On most things, as houses, stones, earth, it causeth nothing but accidents of heat, color, and motion.

2. On some things it causeth a seminal disposition to vegetable life, but not life itself.

3. In this disposed matter it causeth vegetable life itself.

So doth the Spirit of God, 1. operate on millions but lifeless accidents, as the sun on a stone wall. 2. On others dispose and prepare them to divine life. 3. On others so disposed it effecteth the divine life itself, when holy love is turned into a habit like to nature.

That none but the Holy Ghost doth make this holy change is evident; for the effect cannot transcend the causes. 1. Nature alone is dark, and knoweth not the attractive amiableness of God, till illuminated; nor can give us a satisfactory notice of God's special love to us.

2. Nature is guilty, and guilt breedeth fears of justice, and fear makes us become wild, and fly from God, lest he should hurt us.

3. Nature is under penal sufferings already; and feeleth pain, fear, and many hurts, and foreseeeth death; and under this is undispensed, of itself, to feel the pleasure of God's love.

4. Nature is corrupted and diverted to creature vanity, and its appetite goeth another way, and cannot cure itself and make itself suitable to the amiableness of God.

5. God hateth wickedness and wicked men; and mere nature cannot secure us, that we are saved from that enmity.

Diligence may do much to get religious knowledge, and words, and all that which I call the art of religion; and God may bless this as a preparation to holy life and love. But till the soul's appetite incline, with desire, to God and holiness, divine things will not sweetly relish.

And this is a great comfort to the thoughts of the sanctified, that certainly their holy appetite, desire, and complacency, is the work of the Holy Ghost. For, 1. this secureth them of the love of God, of which it is the proper token. 2. And it assureth them of their union with Christ, when they live because he liveth, even by the Spirit, which is his seal and pledge. 3. And it proveth both a future life and their title to it; for God maketh not all this preparation for it by his Spirit in vain.

But alas! if it were not a work that hath great impediment, it would not be so rare in the world. What is it in us, that keepeth the sun of love from so shining on us as to revive our souls into holy contentments and delight?

It must be supposed, 1. that all God's gifts are free, and that he giveth not to all alike; the wonderful variety of creatures proveth this. 2. The reasons of his differencing works are his own will, and inferior reasons are mostly unknown to us, of which he is not bound to give us an account.

3. But yet we see that God doth his works in a causal order,

and one work prepareth for another ; and he maketh variety of capacities, which occasion variety of receptions and of gifts ; and he useth to give every thing that to which he hath brought it into the next capacity and disposition.

And therefore, in general, we may conclude that we feel not God's love shed abroad upon the heart, because the heart is undisposed, and is not in the next disposition thereto ; and abused free-will hath been the cause of that. That we have grace, is to be ascribed to God : that we are without it, is to be ascribed to ourselves.

1. Heinous guilt of former sin may keep a soul much without the delights of divine love ; and the heinousness is not only in the greatness of the evil done, materially, but oft in our long and willful committing of smaller sins, against knowledge, and conscience, and consideration. The Spirit thus grieved by hardened hearts, and willful repulses, is not quickly and easily a Comforter to such a soul ; and when the sinner doth repent, it leaveth him more in uncertainty of his sincerity when he thinks, ' I do but repent, purpose, and promise now ; and so I oft did, and yet returned the next temptation to my sin : and how can I tell that my heart is not the same, and I should sin again if I had the same temptations ? ' O, what doubts and perplexities doth oft willful sinning prepare for !

2. And sins of omissions have here a great part. The sweetness of God's love is a reward which slothful servants are unmeet for. It follows a " Well done, good and faithful servant." There is needful a close attendance upon God, and devotedness to him, and improvement of gospel grace, and revelation, to make a soul fit for amicable, sweet communion with God : all that will save a soul from hell will not do this.

He that will taste these divine love-tokens must, 1. Be no stranger to holy meditation and prayer, nor unconstant, cold, and cursory in them ; but must dwell and walk above with God. 2. And he must be wholly addicted to improve his Master's talents in the world, and make it his design and trade on earth to do all the good in the world he can ; and to keep his soul clean from the flesh, and worldly vanity. And to such a soul God will make known his love.

3. And, alas ! how ordinarily doth some carnal affection corrupt the appetite of the soul ! When we grow too much in love with men's esteem, or with earthly riches, or when our throats or fancies can master us into obedience, or vain desires of meat, drink, recreation, dwelling, &c., the soul loseth its appetite to things divine ; and nothing relisheth where appetite is gone or sick. We cannot serve God and Mammon, and we cannot at once taste much pleasure both in God and Mammon. The old, austere

Christians found the mortification of the fleshly lusts a great advantage to the soul's delight in God.

4. And many errors about God's nature and works much hinder us from feasting on his love.

5. And especially the slight and ignorant thoughts of Christ, and the wondrous workings of God's love in him.

6. And especially if our belief itself once shake, or be not well and firmly founded.

7. And our slight thoughts of the office and work of the Holy Ghost on souls, and our necessity of it, and our not begging and waiting for the Spirit's special help.

8. And lastly, our unfaithful forgetfulness of manifold experiences and testimonies of his love, which should still be as fresh before us.

Alas! my soul, thou feelest thy defect, and knowest the hindrance, but what hope is there of remedy? Will God ever raise so low, so dull, so guilty a heart, to such a foretaste of glory, as is this effusion of his love by the Holy Ghost? The lightsome days in spring and summer, when the sun reviveth the late naked earth, and clothes it with delectable beauties, differs not more from night and winter, than a soul thus revived with the love of God doth differ from an unbelieving, formal soul.

Though this great change be above my power, the Spirit of God is not impotent, backward, barren, or inexorable. He hath appointed us means for so high a state; and he appointeth no means in vain. Were my own heart obedient to my commands, all these following I would lay upon it; yea, I will do it, and beg the help of God.

1. I charge thee, think not of God's goodness and love, as unproportionable to his greatness and his knowledge; nor overlook, in the whole frame of heaven and earth, the manifestation of one any more than of the other.

2. Therefore, let not the wickedness and misery of the world tempt thee to think basely of all God's mercies to the world; nor the peculiar privileges of the churches draw thee to deny or condemn God's common mercies unto all.

3. I charge thee to make the study of Christ, and the great work of man's redemption by him, thy chiefest learning, and most serious and constant work; and in that wonderful glass to see the face of divine love, and to hear what is said of it by the Son from heaven; and to come boldly, as reconciled to God by him.

4. O, see that thy repentance for former sins against knowledge, and conscience, and the motions of God's Spirit, be sound, and thoroughly lamented and abhorred, how small soever the matter

was in itself; that so the doubt of thy sincerity keep not up doubts of God's acceptance.

5. Let thy dependence on the Holy Ghost, as given from Christ, be henceforth as serious and constant to thee as is the dependence of the eye on the light of the sun, and of natural life upon its heat and motion. Beg hard for the Holy Spirit, and gladly entertain it.

6. O, never forget the many and great experiences thou hast had, these almost sixty years observed, of marvelous favor and providence of God, for soul and body, in every time, place, condition, relation, company, or change, thou hast been in! Lose not all these love-tokens of thy Father, while thou art begging more.

7. Harken not too much to pained flesh, and look not too much into the grave; but look out at thy prison windows to the Jerusalem above, and the heavenly society that triumph in glory.

8. Let all thy sure notices of a future life, and of the communion we have here with those above, draw thee to think that the great number of holy souls that are gone before thee must needs be better than they were here; and that they had the same mind, and heart, and way; the same Savior, Sanctifier, and promise, that thou hast; and therefore they are as pledges of felicity to thee. Thou hast joyfully lived with many of them here; and is it not better to be with them there? It is only the state of glory foreseen by faith, which most fully sheweth us the greatness of God's love.

9. Exercise thyself in psalms of praise, and daily magnify the love of God, that the due mention of it may warm and raise thy love to him.

10. Receive all temptations against divine love with hatred and repulse, especially temptations to unbelief; and as thou wouldest abhor a temptation to murder, or perjury, or any other heinous sin, as much abhor all temptations that would hide God's goodness, or represent him to thee as an enemy, or unlovely.

Thus God hath set the glass before us, in which we may see his amiable face. But alas! souls in flesh are in great obscurity, and, conscious of their weakness, are still distrustful of themselves, and doubt of all their apprehensions, till overpowering objects and influences satisfy and fix them. For this my soul, with daily longing, doth seek to thee, my God and Father: O, pardon the sin that forfeits grace: I am ready to say, 'Draw nearer to me;' but it is meeter to say, 'Open thou my eyes and heart, and remove all impediments, and undisposedness, that I may believe and feel how near thou art, and hast been to me, while I perceived it not.'

XIII. It is God's love shed abroad on the heart by the Holy Ghost, which must make us "rejoice in hope of the glory of God:" this will do it, and without this it will not be done.

This would turn the fears of death into joyful hopes of future life. If my God will thus warm my heart with his love, it will have these following effects in this matter:—

1. Love longeth for union, or nearness, and fruition; and it would make my soul long after God in glorious presence.

2. This would make it much easier to me to believe that there is certainly a future blessed life for souls; while I even tasted how God loveth them. It is no hard thing to believe that the sun will give light and heat, and revive the frozen earth; nor that a father will show kindness to his son, or give him an inheritance. Why should it be hard to believe that God will glorify the souls whom he loveth, and that he will take them near himself; and that thus it shall be done to those whom he delights to honor?

3. This effusion of divine love would answer my doubts of the pardon of sin: I should not find it hard to believe that love itself, which hath given us a Savior, will forgive a soul that truly repenteth, and hates his sin, and giveth up himself to Christ for justification. It is hard to believe that a tyrant will forgive, but not that a father will pardon a returning prodigal son.

4. This effusion of divine love will answer my fears, which arise from mere weakness of grace and duty; indeed it will give no other comfort to an unconverted soul, but that he may be accepted if he come to God by Christ, with true faith and repentance; and that this is possible. But it should be easy to believe, that a tender father will not kill nor cast out a child for weakness, crying or uncleanness: divine love will accept and cherish even weak faith, weak prayer, and weak obedience and patience, which are sincere.

5. This effused love would confute temptations that are drawn from thy afflictions, and make thee believe that they are not so bad as flesh representeth them: it would understand that every son that God loveth he chasteneth, that he may not be condemned with the world, and that he may be partaker of his holiness, and the end may be the quiet fruit of righteousness: it would teach us to believe that God in very faithfulness doth afflict us; and that it is a good sign that the God of Love intendeth a better life for his beloved, when he trieth them with so many tribulations here; and though Lazarus be not saved for his suffering, it signified that God, who loved him, had a life of comfort for him, when he had his evil things on earth. When pangs are greatest, the birth is nearest.

6. Were love thus shed on the heart by the Holy Ghost, it would give me a livelier apprehension of the state of blessedness which all the faithful now enjoy: I should delightfully think of them as living in the joyful love of God, and ever fully replenished therewith. It pleaseth us to see the earth flourish in the spring, and to see how pleasantly the lambs, and other young things will skip and play; much more to see societies of holy Christians loving each other and provoking one another to delight in God. O, then, what a pleasant thought should it be, to think how all our deceased godly friends, and all that have so died since the creation, are now together in a world of divine, perfect love! How they are all continually wrapped up in the love of God, and live in the delight of perfect love to one another!

O my soul, when thou art with them, thou wilt dwell in love, and feast on love, and rest in love; for thou wilt more fully dwell in God, and God in thee; and thou wilt dwell with none but perfect lovers: they would not silence thee from praising God in their assembly: tyrants, malignants, and persecutors, are more strange there (or far from thence) than toads, and snakes, and crocodiles are from the bed or bedchamber of the king. Love is the air, the region, the world, they live in: love is their nature, their pulse, their breath, their constitution, their complexion, and their work: it is their life, and even themselves and all. Full loath would one of those spirits be to dwell again among blind Sodomites, and mad, self-damning malignants upon earth.

7. Yea, this effused love will teach us to gather the glory of the blessed from the common mercies of this life: doth God give his distracted, malignant enemies, health, wealth, plenty, pleasure, yea, lordships, dominions, crowns, and kingdoms; and hath he not much better for beloved, holy souls!

Yea, doth he give the brutes life, sense, delight, and beauty; and hath he not better things for men; for saints?

There are some so blind as to think that man shall have no better, hereafter, because brutes have not, but perish. But they know not how erroneously they think. The sensible souls of brutes are substance, and therefore are not annihilated at death; but God put them under us, and made them for us, and us more nearly for himself. Brutes have not faculties to know and love God, to meditate on him, or praise him, or, by moral agency, to obey his precepts: they desire not any higher felicity than they have: God will have us use their service, yea, their lives and flesh, to tell us they were made for us. He tells us not what he doth with them after death; but whatever it is, it is not annihilation, and it is like they are in a state still of service unto man:

whether united, or how individuate, we know not ; nor yet whether those philosophers are in the right, that think that this earth is but a small image of the vast superior regions, where there are kingdoms answerable to these here, where the spirits of brutes are in the like subjection, in aërial bodies, to those low, rational spirits that inhabit the aërial regions, as in flesh they were to man in flesh. But it is enough for us that God hath given us faculties to know, love, praise, and obey him, and trust him for glory, which he never gave to them, because they were not made for things so high. Every creature's faculties are suited to their use and ends.

And love tells me, that the blessed God, who giveth to brutes that life, health, and pleasure, which they are made and fitted for, will give his servants that heavenly delight in the fullness of his love and praise, and mutual, joyful love to one another, which nature fundamentally, and grace more immediately, hath made them fit for.

Blessed Jehovah ! for what tastes of this effused love thou hast given me, my soul doth bless thee, with some degree of gratitude and joy ; and for those further measures which I want and long for, and which my pained, languid state much needs, and which would raise my joyful hopes of glory, I wait, I beg, from day to day. O, give me now, at the door of heaven, some fuller taste of the heavenly felicity : shed more abroad upon my heart, by the Holy Ghost, that love of thine, which will draw up my longing soul to thee, rejoicing in the hope of the glory of God.

TRUE CHRISTIANITY;

OR,

CHRIST'S ABSOLUTE DOMINION,

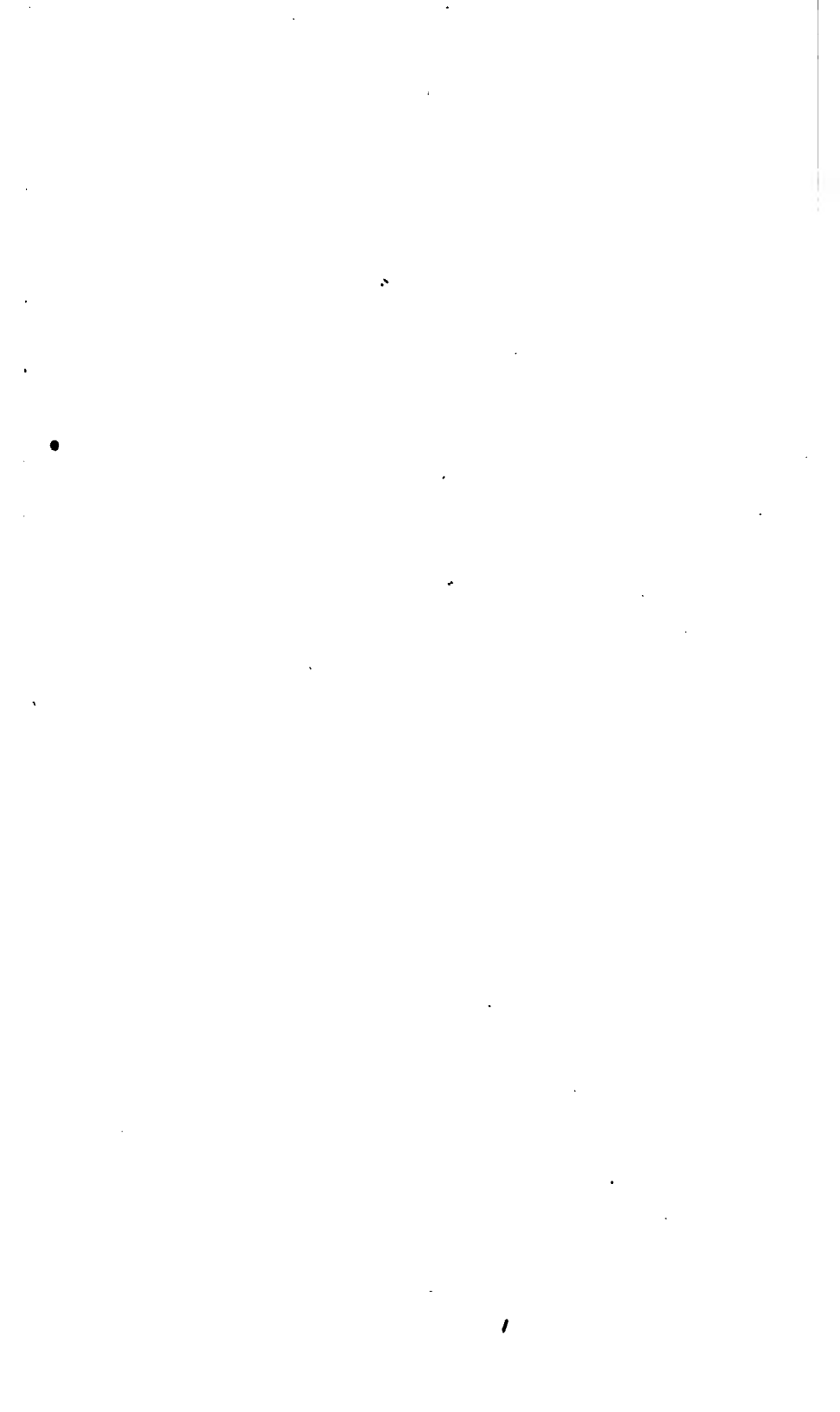
AND

**MAN'S NECESSARY SELF-RESIGNATION AND
SUBJECTION.**

IN TWO ASSIZE SERMONS, PREACHED AT WORCESTER.

"For to this end Christ both died, and rose, and revived, that he might be Lord both of the dead and the living."—ROM. xiv. 9.

"But those mine enemies which would not that I should reign over them, bring hither, and slay them before me."—LUKE xix. 27.



TO THE

RIGHT HONORABLE SERJEANT GLYN,

NOW JUDGE OF ASSIZE IN THIS CIRCUIT.

MY LORD,

COULD my excuse have satisfied you, this sermon had been confined to the auditory it was prepared for. I cannot expect that it should find that candor and favor with every reader, as it did with the hearers. When it must speak to all, the guilty will hear, and then it will gall. Innocency is patient in hearing a reproof, and charitable in the interpretation; but guilt will smart and quarrel, and usually make a fault in him that findeth one in them. Yet I confess this is but a poor justification of his silence that hath a call to speak. Both my calling and this sermon would condemn me, if, on such grounds, I should draw back; but my backwardness was caused by the reason which I then tendered your lordship as my excuse, viz. because here is nothing but what is common, and that it is in as common and homely a dress. And I hope we need not fear that our labors are dead, unless the press shall give them life. We bring not sermons to church, as we do a corpse for a burial. If there be life in them, and life in the hearers, the connaturality will cause such an amicable closure, that through the reception, retention, and operation of the soul, they will be the immortal seed of a life everlasting. But yet, seeing the press hath a louder voice than mine, and the matter in hand is of such exceeding necessity, I shall not refuse, upon such an invitation, to be a remembrancer to the world of a doctrine and duty of such high concernment, though they have heard it ever so oft before. Seeing, therefore, I must present that now to your eyes, which I lately presented to your ears, I shall take the boldness to add one word of application in this epistle, which I thought not seasonable to mention in the first delivery, and that shall be to your lordship, and all others in your present case, that are elected members of this expected Parliament. Be sure to remember the interest of your Sovereign, the great Lord-protector of heaven and earth. And as ever you will make him a comfortable account of your

power, abilities and opportunities of serving him, see that you prefer his interest before your own, or any man's on earth. If you go not thither, as sent by him, with a firm resolution to serve him first, you were better sit at home. Forget not that he hath laid claim to you, and to all that you have, and all that you can do. I am bold, with all possible earnestness, to entreat you, yea, as Christ's minister, to require you, in his name, to study and remember his business and interest, and see that it have the chief place in all your consultations. Watch against the encroachments of your own carnal interests; consult not with flesh and blood, nor give it the hearing when it shall offer you its advice. How subtilly will it insinuate! How importunately will it urge you! How certainly will it mar all, if you do not constantly and resolvedly watch! O, how hard, but how happy is it to conquer this carnal self! Remember, still, that you are not your own; that you have an unseen Master that must be pleased, whoever be displeased, and an unseen kingdom to be obtained, and an invisible soul that must be saved, though all the world be lost. Fix your eyes still on him that made and redeemed you, and upon the ultimate end of your Christian race, and do nothing, willfully, unworthy such a master, and such an end. Often renew your self-resignation, and devote yourself to him; sit close at his work, and be sure that it be his, both in the matter and in your intent. If conscience should at any time ask, 'Whose work are you now doing?' or a man should pluck you by the sleeve, and say, 'Sir, whose cause are you now pleading?' see that you have the answer of a Christian at hand: delay not God's work till you have done your own, or any one's else. You will best secure the commonwealth, and your own interest, by looking first to his. By neglecting this, and being carnally wise, we have wheeled about so long in the wilderness, and lost those advantages against the powers of darkness, which we know not whether we shall ever recover again. It is the great astonishment of sober men, and not the least reproach that ever was cast on our holy profession, to think with what a zeal for the work of Christ men seemed to be animated in the beginning of our disagreements, and how deeply they did engage themselves to him in solemn vows, protestations, and covenants, and what advantages carnal self hath since got, and turned the stream another way! So that the same men have since been the instruments of our calamity, in breaking in pieces and dishonoring the churches of Christ, yea, and gone so near to the taking down, as much as in them lay, the whole ministry that stand approved in the land. O, do not, by trifling, give advantage to the tempter to destroy your work and you together! Take warning by the sad experiences of what is past; bestir you speedily and vigorously for Christ,

as knowing your opposition, and the shortness of your time. 'Blessed is that servant whom his Lord, when he cometh, shall find so doing.' If you ask me wherein this interest of Christ doth consist, I shall tell you, but in a few unquestionable particulars.

1. In the main, that truth, godliness, and honesty be countenanced and encouraged; and their contraries, by all fit means, suppressed.

2. In order to this, that unworthy men be removed from magistracy and ministry, and the places supplied with the fittest that can be had.

3. That a competent maintenance may be procured where it is wanting, especially for cities and great towns, where more teachers are so necessary, in some proportion to the number of souls, and on which the country doth so much depend. Shall an age of such high pretenses to reformation and zeal for the churches, alienate so much, and then leave them destitute, and say, it cannot be had? 4. That right means be used, with speed and diligence, for the healing of our divisions, and the uniting of all the true churches of Christ at last, in these nations; and O that your endeavors might be extended much further! To which end, I shall mention but these two means, of most evident necessity.

1. That there be one Scripture creed, or confession of faith, agreed on by a general assembly of able ministers, duly and freely chosen hereunto, which shall contain nothing but matter of evident necessity and verity. This will serve, 1. For a test to the churches to discern the sound professors from the unsound, (as to their doctrine,) and to know them with whom they may close as brethren, and whom they must reject. 2. For a test to the magistrate of the orthodox to be encouraged, and of the intolerably heterodox, which, it seems, is intended in the 37th article of the late formed government, where all that will have liberty must profess faith in God by Jesus Christ, which, in a Christian sense, must comprehend every true fundamental article of our faith; and, no doubt, it is not the bare speaking of those words in an unchristian sense that is intended; as if a ranter should say, that himself is God, and his mate is Jesus Christ.

2. That there be a public establishment of the necessary liberty of the churches, to meet their officers and delegates on all just occasions, in assemblies smaller or greater, (even national, when it is necessary,) seeing, without associations and communion in assemblies, the unity and concord of the churches is not like to be maintained. I exclude not the magistrates' interest, or oversight, to see that they do not transgress their bounds. As you love Christ, and his church and gospel, and men's souls, neglect not these unquestionable points of his interest, and make them your first and chiefest business, and let none be preferred before him until you know them to be of more authority over you, and better friends

to you than Christ is. Should there be any among you that cherish a secret root of infidelity, after such pretenses to the purest Christianity, and are jealous of Christ lest he should overtop them, and do set up an interest inconsistent with his sovereignty, and, thereupon, grow jealous of the liberties and power of his ministers, and of the unity and strength of his church, and think it their best policy to keep under his ministers, by hindering them from the exercise of their office, and to foment divisions, and hinder our union, that they may have parties ready to serve their ends; I would not be in the case of such men, when God ariseth to judge them, for all the crowns and kingdoms on earth! If they stumble on this stone, it will break them in pieces, but if it fall upon them, it will grind them to powder. They may seem to prevail against him awhile, when their supposed success is but a prosperous self-destroying: but mark the end, when his wrath is kindled, yea, but a little, and when these, his enemies, that would not he should reign over them, are brought forth and destroyed before him, then they will be convinced of the folly of their rebellion. In the mean time, let wisdom be justified of her children.

My lord, I had not troubled you with so many words, had I not judged it probable that many more whom they concern may peruse them.

I remain, your Lordship's servant in the work of Christ,

RICHARD BAXTER.

August 5, 1654.

A SERMON

ON THE

ABSOLUTE DOMINION OF GOD-REDEEMER;

AND

THE NECESSITY OF BEING DEVOTED AND LIVING
TO HIM.

PREACHED BEFORE THE HONORABLE JUDGE OF ASSIZE
AT WORCESTER, AUGUST 2, 1654.

1 COR. vi. 19, 20.

AND YE ARE NOT YOUR OWN, FOR YE ARE BOUGHT WITH A PRICE;
THEREFORE GLORIFY GOD IN YOUR BODY, AND IN YOUR SPIRIT,
WHICH ARE GOD'S.

FUNDAMENTALS in religion are the life of the superstructure. Like the vitals and naturals in the body, which are first necessary for themselves and you also, for the quickening and nourishing of the rest; there being no life or growth of the inferior parts, but what they do receive from the powers of these: it is but a dead discourse, which is not animated by these greater truths, whatever the bulk of its materials may consist of. The frequent repetition, therefore, of these, is as excusable as frequent preaching; and they that nauseate it as loathsome battology, do love novelty better than verity, and playing with words to please the fancy, rather than closing with Christ to save the soul. And as it is the chief part of the cure, in most external maladies, to corroborate the vital and natural powers, which then will do the work themselves, so it is the most effectual course for the cure of particular miscarriages in men's lives, to further the main work of grace upon their hearts. Could we make men better Christians, it would do much to make them better magistrates, counsellors, jurors, witnesses, subjects, neighbors, &c. And this must be done by the deeper impress of those vital truths and the good in them exhibited, which are adequate objects of our vital graces. Could we help you to wind up

the spring of faith, and so move the first wheel of Christian love, we should find it the readiest and surest means to move the inferior wheels of duty. The flaws and irregular motions without do show that something is amiss within, which, if we could rectify, we might the easier mend the rest. I shall suppose, therefore, that I need no more apology for choosing such a subject at such a season as this, than for bringing bread to a feast. And if I medicate the brain and heart, for the curing of senseless paralytic members, or the inordinate convulsive motions of any hearers, I have the warrant of the apostle's example in my text. Among other great enormities in the church of Corinth, he had these three to reprehend and heal: First, their sidings and divisions, occasioned by some factious, self-seeking teachers. Secondly, their personal contentions by law-suits, and that before unbelieving judges. Thirdly, the foul sin of fornication, which some among them had fallen into. The great cure which he useth to all these, and more especially to the last, is the urging of these great foundation truths, whereof one is in the words before my text, viz. the right of the Holy Ghost; the other, in the words of my text, which contains, first, a denial of any right of propriety in themselves. Secondly, an asserting of Christ's propriety in them. Thirdly, the proof of this from his purchase, which is his title. Fourthly, their duty, concluded from the former premises, which is to glorify God, and that with the whole man, with the spirit, because God is a Spirit, and loathes hypocrisy; with the body, which is particularly mentioned, because it seems they were encouraged to fornication by such conceits, that it was but an act of the flesh, and not of the mind, and, therefore, as they thought, the smaller sin. The apostle's words, from last to first, according to the order of intention, do express, first, man's duty to glorify God with soul and body, and not to serve our lusts. Secondly, the great fundamental obligation to this duty, God's dominion or propriety. Thirdly, the foundation of that dominion, Christ's purchase. According to the order of execution, from first to last, these three great fundamentals of our religion lie thus: First, Christ's purchase. Secondly, God's propriety thence arising. Thirdly, man's duty—wholly to glorify God, arising from oath. The argument lies thus: they that are not their own, but wholly God's, should wholly glorify God, and not serve their lusts; but you are not your own, but wholly God's; therefore you should wholly glorify God, and not serve your lusts. The major is clear by the common light of nature. Every one should have the use of their own. The minor is proved thus: they that are bought with a price, are not their own, but his that bought them; but you are bought with a price; therefore, &c. For the meaning of the terms briefly; *ἰσχύω*, *vestri*, as the vulgar; *vestri juris*, as Beza

and others, is most fitly expressed by our English, your own: "ye are bought:" a "*synecdoche generis*," saith Piscator, for "ye are redeemed with a price." There is no buying without a price. This, therefore, is an emphatical *pleonasmus*, as Beza, Piscator, and others; as to see with the eyes, to hear with the ears. Or else, "a price" is put for "a great price," as Calvin, Peter Martyr, and Piscator, rather think; and, therefore, the vulgate adds the epithet *magno*, and the Arabic *pretioso*, as Beza notes, as agreeing to that of 1 Peter i. 18. I see not but we may suppose the apostle to respect both the purchase and the greatness of the price, as Grotius and some others do. "Glorify God," that is, by using your bodies and souls wholly for him, and abstaining from those lusts which do dishonor him. The vulgate adds *et portate*, *q. d.* bear God about in your hearts, and let his Spirit dwell with you instead of lust. But this addition is contrary to all our Greek copies. Grotius thinks that some copies had ἀποτὸν θεόν, and thence some unskillful scribe did put ἀπο τε: however, it seems that reading was very ancient, when not only Austin, but Cyprian and Tertullian followed it, as Beza noteth. The last words, "And in your spirit, which are God's," are out of all the old Latin translations, and, therefore, it is like out of the Greek, which they used: but they are in all the present Greek copies, except our manuscript, as also in the Syriac and Arabic version.

The rest of the explication shall follow the doctrines, which are these:

Doct. 1. [We are bought with a price.]

Doct. 2. Because we are so bought, we are not our own, but his that bought us.

Doct. 3. Because we are not our own, but wholly God's, therefore we must not serve our lusts, but glorify him in the body and spirit. In these three conclusions is the substance of the text; which I shall first explain, and then make application of them in that order as the apostle here doth.

The points that need explication are these:—

First. In what sense are we said to be bought with a price? Who bought us? And of whom? And from what? And with what price?

Secondly. How we are God's own upon the title of this purchase.

Thirdly. How we are not our own.

Fourthly. What it is to glorify God in body and in spirit on this account.

Fifthly. Who they be that, on this ground, are, or may be, urged to this duty.

1. For the first of these, whether buying here be taken properly or metaphorically I will not now inquire.

First. Mankind, by sin, became guilty of death, liable to God's wrath, and a slave to Satan, and his own lusts. The sentence in part was past, and execution begun: the rest would have followed, if not prevented. This is the bondage from which we were redeemed.

Secondly. He that redeemed us is the Son of God—himself God and man, and the Father by the Son. "He purchased us with his own blood;" Acts xx. 28.

Thirdly. The price was the whole humiliation of Christ; in the first act whereof, his incarnation, the Godhead was alone, which, by humbling itself, did suffer reputatively, which could not really. In the rest, the whole person was the sufferer, but still the human nature really, and the divine but reputatively. And why we may not add, as part of the price, the merit of that obedience wherein his suffering did not consist, I yet see not. But from whom were we redeemed?

Answer. From Satan, by rescue against his will; from God's wrath or vindictive justice, by his own procurement and consent. He substituted for us such a sacrifice, by which he could as fully attain the ends of his righteous government, in the demonstration of his justice and hatred of sin, as if the sinner had suffered himself; and, in this sound sense, it is far from being an absurdity, as the Socinian dreameth, for God to satisfy his own justice, or to buy us of himself, or redeem us from himself.

2. Next, let us consider how we are God's upon the title of this purchase. By "God," here is meant both the Son, who, being God, hath procured a right in us by his redemption, and also the Father, who sent his Son, and redeemed us by him, and to whom it was that the Son redeemed us. "Thou hast redeemed us to God by thy blood;" Rev. v. 9. In one word, it is God as Redeemer, the manhood also of the second person included, that hath purchased this right. Here you must observe that God, as Creator, had a plenary right of propriety and government, on which he founded the law of works that then was. This right he hath not lost. Our fall did lose our right in him, but could not destroy his right in us. Because it destroyed our right, therefore the promissory part of that law was immediately thereupon dissolved, or ceased, through our incapacity, and therefore divines say that, as a covenant, it ceased; but because it destroyed not God's right, therefore the preceptive and penal parts of that law do still remain. But how remain? In their being; but not alone, or without remedy; for the Son of God became a sacrifice in our stead;

not that we might absolutely, immediately, or, *ipso facto*, be fully delivered, or that any man should, *ab ipsa hostia*, from the very sacrifice as made, have a right to the great benefits of personal, plenary reconciliation, and remission, and everlasting life; but that the necessity of perishing through the dissatisfaction of justice for the alone offenses against the law of works being removed from mankind, they might all be delivered up to him as proprietary and rector, that he might rule them as his redeemed ones, and make for them such new laws of grace, for the conveyances of his benefits, as might demonstrate the wisdom and mercy of our Redeemer, and be most suitable to his ends. The world is now morally dead in sin, though naturally alive. Christ hath redeemed them, but will cure them by the actual conveyance of the benefits of redemption, or not at all. He hath undertaken to this end himself to be their physician, to cure all that will come to him and take him so to be, and trust him and obey him in the application of his medicines. He hath erected an hospital, his church, to this end, and commanded all to come into this ark. Those that are far distant he first commandeth to come nearer, and those that are near he inviteth to come in. Too many do refuse, and perish in their refusal. He will not suffer all to do so, but mercifully boweth the wills of his elect, and, by an insuperable, powerful drawing, compels them to come in. You may see, then, that here is a *novum jus, et dominii, et imperii*, a new right of propriety and rule, founded on the new bottom of redemption; but that this doth not destroy the old, which was founded on creation; but it is in the very nature and use of it an emendative addition. Redemption is to mend the creature, not of any defect that was left in the creation, but from the ruin which came by our defacing transgression. The law of grace upon this redemption is superadded to the law of nature given on the creation; not to amend any imperfections in that law, but to save the sinner from its insufferable penalty by dissolving its obligation of him thereto; and thus, in its nature and use, it is a remedying law. And so you may see that Christ is now the owner, and, by right, the governor of the whole world, on the title of redemption, as God before was, and still is, on the title of creation.

3. By this you may also perceive in what sense we are not our own. In the strictest sense, there is no proprietary, or absolute Lord, in the world, but God. No man can say this is fully and strictly mine. God gives us, indeed, whatever we enjoy; but his giving is not as man's. We part with our propriety in that which we give, but God gives nothing so. His giving to us makes it not the less his own. As a man giveth his goods to his neighbor to dispose of for his use, or instruments to his servant to do his work

with, so God giveth his benefits to us ; or, at the utmost, as you give clothes to your child, which are more yours still than his, and you may take them away at your pleasure. I confess, when God hath told us that he will not take them away, he is, as it were, obliged, in fidelity, to continue them, but yet doth not, hereby, let go his propriety : and so Christ bids us call no man on earth father ; that is, our absolute lord or ruler, because we have but one such master, who is in heaven ; Matt. xxiii. 7—10. So that you see, by this, what propriety is left us, and what right we have to ourselves and our possessions. Even such, as a steward in his master's goods, or a servant in his tools, or a child in his coat, which is a propriety, improper, subordinate, and *secundum quid*, and will secure us against the usurpation of another. One servant may not take his fellow's instrument from him, nor one child his brother's coat from him, without the parent's or master's consent. They have them for their use, though not the full propriety. It may be called a propriety, in respect to our fellow-servant, though it be not properly so as we stand in respect to God. We have right enough to confute the leveler, but not to exempt either us or ours from the claim and use of our absolute Lord.

4. What is it to glorify God in body and spirit ? I answer, in a word, it is when, upon true believing apprehensions of his right to us, and of our great obligations to him as our Redeemer, we heartily and unfeignedly devote ourselves to him, and live as a people so devoted ; so bending the chief of our care and study how to please him in exact obedience, that the glory of his mercy and holiness, and of his wise and righteous laws, may be seen in our conversations ; and that the holy conformity of our lives to these laws may show that there is like conformity in our minds, and that they are written in our hearts ; when the excellency of the Christian religion is so apparent in the excellency of our lives, causing us to do that which no others can imitate, that the lustre of our good works may shine before men, and cause them to glorify our Father in heaven. To conclude ; when we still respect God as our only absolute sovereign, and Christ as our Redeemer, and his Spirit as our sanctifier, and his law as our rule ; that the doing of his will, and the denying of our own, is the daily work of our lives, and the promoting of his blessed ends is our end ; this is the glorifying of God, who hath redeemed us.

5. The last question is, Who they be that are and may be urged to glorify God, on this ground, that he hath bought them ? Doubtless only those whom he hath bought ; but who are those ? It discourageth me to tell you, because, among the godly, it is a controversy ; but if they will controvert points of such great moment, they cannot disoblige or excuse us from preaching them.

Among the variety of men's opinions, it is safe to speak in the language of the Holy Ghost, and accordingly to believe that, "As, by the offense of one, judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so, by the righteousness of one, the free gift came upon all men, to justification of life;" (Rom. v. 18.) and "That he gave himself a ransom for all, and is the only mediator between God and man;" (1 Tim. ii. 5, 6.) "That he is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world;" (1 John ii. 2.) "That God is the Savior of all men, especially of those that believe;" (1 Tim. iv. 10.) "That he is the Savior of the world;" (John iv. 42. 1 John iv. 14, 15.) "That he tasteth death for every man;" (Heb. ii. 9.) with many the like. It is sad to consider how men's unskillfulness to reconcile God's general grace with his special, and to assign to each its proper part, hath made the Pelagians, and their successors, to deny the special grace; and too many of late, no less dangerously, to deny the general grace; and what contentions these two erroneous parties have maintained, and still maintain, in the church, and how few observe or follow that true and sober mean which Austin, the Maul of the Pelagians, and his scholars, Prosper and Fulgentius, walked in! If, when our dark, confused heads are unable to assign each truth its place, and rightly to order each wheel and pin in the admirable fabric of God's revelations, we shall, therefore, fall a wrangling against them, and reject them; we may then be drawn to blaspheme the Trinity, to reject Christ's human nature, or his divine; and what truth shall we not be in danger to lose? To think this general grace to be inconsistent with the special is no wiser than to think the foundation inconsistent with the fabric that is built thereupon; and that the builders themselves should have such thoughts is a matter of compassionate consideration to the friends of the church. Doubtless Christ died not for all alike, nor with equal intentions of saving them; and yet he hath borne the sins of all men on the cross, and was a sacrifice, propitiation, and ransom for all. Even they that bring in damnable heresies, deny the Lord that bought them, and bring on themselves swift destruction; 2 Peter ii. 1. "God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through him might be saved. He that believeth on him is not condemned; but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only-begotten Son of God. And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil;" John iii. 17—19. I doubt not but my text doth warrant me to tell you all, that you are not your own, but are bought with a price, and, therefore, must glorify him that bought you; and I am very confident that if any

one at judgment will be the advocate of an unbeliever, and say, he deserves not a sorer punishment for sinning against the Lord that bought him, his plea will not be taken; or if any such would comfort the consciences in hell, or go about to cure them of so much of their torment, by telling them that they never sinned against one that redeemed them, nor ever rejected the blood of Christ shed for them, and, therefore, need not accuse themselves of any such sin, those poor sinners would not be able to believe them. If it be only the elect with whom we must thus argue, 'You are not your own; you are bought with a price; therefore, glorify God;' then can we truly plead thus with none till we know them to be elect, which will not be in this world. I do not think Paul knew them all to be elect that he wrote to, I mean, absolutely chosen to salvation; nor do I think he would so peremptorily affirm them to be bought with a price, who were fornicators, defrauders, contentious, drunk at the Lord's supper, &c., and from hence have argued against their sins, if he had taken this for a privilege proper to the elect. I had rather say to scandalous sinners, 'You are bought with a price; therefore glorify God;' than, 'You are absolutely elect to salvation; therefore, glorify God.' And I believe that, as it is the sin of apostates to "crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh," (Heb. vi. 5, 6.) so is it their misery, that "there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment, and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries, because they have trodden under foot the Son of God, and counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith they were sanctified, an unholy thing;" Heb. x. 26—28. Lastly, I judge it also a good argument to draw us from offending others, and occasioning their sin, that "through us our weak brother shall perish, for whom Christ died;" 1 Cor. viii. 11. So much for explication.

I would next proceed to the confirmation of the doctrines here contained, but that they are so clear in the text, and in many others, that I think it next to needless, and we have now no time for needless work, and, therefore, shall only cite these two or three texts, which confirm almost all that I have said together: (Rom. xiv. 9.) "For to this end Christ both died, and rose, and revived, that he might be Lord both of the dead and living;" (2 Cor. v. 14, 15.) "We thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead; and that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again;" (Matt. xxviii. 18—20.) "All power is given me in heaven and in earth. Go ye, therefore, disciple all nations, baptizing them, &c., teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you;" (1 Peter i. 17, 18.) "If ye call on the Father,

who, without respect of persons, judgeth every man according to his works, pass the time of your sojourning here in fear; forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation, but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish, and without spot." These texts speak to the same purpose with that which I have in hand.

Use. In applying these very useful truths, would time permit, I should begin at the intellect, with a confutation of divers contrary errors, and a collection of many observable consecretaries. It would go better with all the commonwealths and princes on earth, if they well considered that the absolute propriety and sovereignty of God-Redeemer is the basis of all lawful societies and governments; and that no man hath any absolute propriety, but only the use of the talents that God doth intrust him with; that the sovereignty of the creature is but analogical, *secundum quid*; improper, and subordinate to God, the proper sovereign; that it belongs to him to appoint his inferior officers; that there is no power but from God; and that he giveth none against himself; that a theocracy is the government that must be desired and submitted to, whether the subordinate part be monarchical, aristocratical, or democratical; and the rejecting of this was the Israelites' sin in choosing them a king; that it is still possible and necessary to live under this theocracy, though the administration be not by such extraordinary means as among the Israelites; that all human laws are but by-laws, subordinate to God's. How far his laws must take place in all governments. How far those laws of men are, *ipso facto*, null, that are unquestionably destructive of the laws of God: how far they that are not their own, may give authority to others; and what aspect these principles have upon liberty in that latitude as it is taken by some; and upon the authority of the multitude, especially in church government. Should I stand on these and other the like consequents, which these fundamentals in hand might lead us to discuss, I should prevent that more seasonable application which I intend, and, perhaps, be thought, in some of them, to meddle beyond my bounds. I will only say, that God is the first and the last in our ethics and politics, as well as in our physics; that, as there is no creature which he made not, so it is no good right of property or government which he, some way, gives not; that all commonwealths, not built on this foundation, are as castles in the air, or as children's tottering structures, which, in the very framing, are prepared for their ruin, and, strictly, are no commonwealths at all; and those governors, that rule not more for God than for themselves, shall be dealt with as traitors to the universal sove-

reign. Thus far, at least, must our politics be divine, unless we will be mere confederate rebels.

But it is yet a closer application which I intend. Though we are not our own, yet every man's welfare should be so dear to himself, that, methinks, every man of you should presently inquire how far you are concerned in the business which we have in hand. I will tell you how far. The case here described is all our own. We are bought with a price, and, therefore, not our own, and, therefore, must live to him that bought us. We must do it, or else we violate our allegiance, and are traitors to our Redeemer. We must do it, or else we shall perish as despisers of his blood. It is no matter of indifferency, nor a duty which may be dispensed with. That God is our owner by creation and redemption, and who doth hitherto keep our souls in these bodies, by whose mere will and power you are all here alive before him this day, will shortly call you before his bar, where these matters will be more seriously and searchingly inquired after. The great question of the day will then be this, Whether you have been heartily devoted to your Redeemer, and lived to him; or to your carnal selves. Upon the resolution of this question your everlasting salvation or damnation will depend. What think you, then? Should not this question be now put home by every rational hearer to his own heart? But I suppose some will say, There is no man that wholly lives to God, for all are sinners; how, then, can our salvation depend so much on this? I answer, in a word:—Though no man pay God all that he oweth him, yet no man shall be saved that giveth him not the preëminence: he will own none as true subjects that do not cordially own him in his sovereignty. Be it known to you all, there shall not a man of you enter into his kingdom, nor ever see his face in peace, that giveth him not the chiefest room in your hearts, and maketh not his work your chiefest business. He will be no underling, or servant to your flesh. He will be served with the best, if he cannot have all. And in this sense is it, that I say the question will be put, in that great day, by the Judge of all, whether God or our carnal selves were preferred. And whether we lived to him that bought us, or to our flesh. Beloved hearers, I will ask you whether you, indeed, believe that there will be such a day. I will take it for granted, while you call yourselves Christians, much less will I question whether you would then be saved or condemned. Nature will not suffer you to be willing of such a misery, though corruption make you too willing of the cause. But the common stupidity of the world doth persuade me to ask you this, whether you think it meet that men who must be so solemnly examined upon this point, and whose life or death de-

depends on the decision, should not examine themselves on it beforehand, and well consider what answer they must then make? And whether any pains can be too great in so needful a work; and whether he that miscarrieth to save a labor, do not madly betray his soul unto perdition? As if such rational diligence were worse than hell, or his present carnal ease were more desirable than his salvation. Let us, then, rouse up ourselves, brethren, in the fear of God, and make this a day of judgment to ourselves. Let us know whether we are children of life or death. O, how can a man that is well in his wits enjoy with any comfort the things of this world, before he know, at least in probability, what he shall enjoy in the next! How can men go cheerfully up and down about the business of this life, before they have faithfully labored to make sure that it shall go well with them in the life to come! That we may now know this without deceit, let us all, as in the presence of the living God, lay bare our hearts, examine them, and judge them, by this portion of his word, according to the evidence.

7. Whoever he be that takes not himself for his own, but lives to his Redeemer, he is one that hath found himself really undone, and hath unfeignedly confessed the forfeiture of his salvation; and, finding that redemption hath been made by Christ, and that there is hope and life to be had in him, and none but him, as he gladly receives the tidings, so he cheerfully acknowledgeth the right of his Redeemer, and in a sober, deliberate, and voluntary covenant, renounceth the world, the flesh, and the devil, and resigneth up himself to Christ as his due. He saith, 'Lord, I have too long served thine enemies and mine own; by cleaving to myself, and forsaking God, I have lost both myself and God: wilt thou be my Savior, and the physician of my soul, and wash me with thy blood, and repair the ruins of my soul by thy Spirit, and I am willing to be thine; I yield up myself to the conduct of thy grace, to be saved in thy way, and fitted for thy service, and live to God, from whom I have revolted.' This is the case of all that are sincere.

By many Scriptures, we might quickly confirm this, if it were liable to question. "If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple; and whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple; Luke xiv. 26, 27. So verse 33: "Whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple." Which is expounded, Matt. x. 37: "He that loveth father or mother more than me, is not worthy of me." "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me. For whosoever will save his life, shall lose it;

and whosoever will lose his life for my sake, shall find it ;" **Matt. xvi. 24.** "Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire besides thee;" **Psalm lxxiii. 25—27.** "The Lord is the portion of mine inheritance," &c. ; **Psalm xvi. 5.** Moses refused honor, and chose "rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season, esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt ; for he had respect to the recompense of the reward ;" **Heb. xi. 24—26.** I forbear citing more, the case being so evident, that God is set highest in the heart of every sound believer, they being in covenant resigned to him as his own. On the contrary, most of the unsanctified are Christians but in name, because they were educated to this profession, and it is the common religion of the country where they live, and they hear none make question of it, or if they do, it is to their own disgrace, the name of Christ having got this advantage, to be every where among us well spoken of, even by those that shall perish for neglecting him and his laws. These men have resigned their names to Christ, but reserved their hearts to flesh-pleasing vanities. Or, if under conviction and terror of conscience, they do make any resignation of their souls to Christ, it comes short of the true resignation of the sanctified in these particulars.

1. It is a firm and rooted belief of the gospel, which is the cause of sincere resignation to Christ. They are so fully persuaded of the truth of those things which Christ hath done, and promised to do hereafter, that they will venture all that they have in this world, and their souls, and their everlasting state upon it. Whereas the belief of self-deceivers is only superficial, staggering, not rooted, and will not carry them to such adventures ; **Matt. xiii. 21—23.**

2. Sincere self-resignation is accompanied with such a love to him that we are devoted to, which overtoppeth (as to the rational part) all other love. The soul hath a prevailing complacency in God, and closeth with him as its chiefest good ; **Psalm lxxiii. 25 ; and lxiii. 3.** But the unsanctified have no such complacency in him ; they would fain please him by their flatteries, lest he should do them any hurt ; but might they enjoy but the pleasures of this world, they could be well content to live without him.

3. Sincere self-resignation is a departing from our carnal selves, and all creatures as they stand in competition with Christ for our hearts ; and so it containeth a crucifying of the flesh, and mortification of all its lusts ; **Gal. v. 24 ; Rom. viii. 1—14.** There is a hearty renouncing of former contradictory interest and delights, that Christ may be set highest and chiefly delighted in. But self-deceivers are never truly mortified when they seem to devote themselves most seriously to Christ : there is a contrary prevailing in-

interest in their minds; their fleshly felicity is nearer to their hearts, and this world is never unfeignedly renounced.

4. Sincere self-resignation is resolved upon deliberation, and not a rash, inconsiderate promise, which is afterwards reversed. The illuminated see that perfection in God, that vanity in the creature, that desirable sufficiency in Christ, and emptiness in themselves, that they firmly resolve to cast themselves on him, and be his alone; and though they cannot please him as they would, they will die before they will change their Master; but with self-deceivers it is not thus.

5. Sincere resignation is absolute and unreserved; such do not capitulate and condition with Christ, 'I will be thine so far, and no further, so thou wilt but save my estate, or credit, or life.' But self-deceivers have ever such reserves in their hearts, though they do not express them, nor, perhaps, themselves discern them. They have secret limitations, expressions, and conditions; they have ever a salve for their worldly safety or felicity, and will rather venture upon a threatened misery which they see not, though everlastingly, than upon a certain temporary misery which they see. These deep reserves are the soul of hypocrisy.

6. Sincere self-resignation is fixed and habituate: it is not forced by a moving sermon, or a dangerous sickness, and then forgotten and laid aside; but it is become a fixed habit in the soul. It is otherwise with self-deceivers: though they will oblige themselves to Christ with vows, in a time of fear and danger, yet so loose is the knot, that when the danger seems over, their bonds fall off. It is one thing to be affrighted, and another to have the heart quite changed and renewed. It is one thing to hire ourselves with a master in our necessities, and yet serve ourselves, or run away, and another thing to nail our ears to his door, and say, 'I love thee, and therefore will not depart.'

So much for the first mark of one that lives not as his own, but as God's, to wit, sincere self-resignation. The second is this.

2. As the heart is thus devoted to God, so also is the life, where men do truly take themselves for his. And that will appear in these three particulars:—

1. The principal study and care of such men is how to please God, and promote his interest, and do his work. This is it that they most seriously mind and contrive. Their own felicity they seek in this way; 1 Cor. vii. 32. 30. Rom. vi. 11. 13. 16. Col. i. 10. and iii. 1—3. Phil. i. 20, 21. 24. It is not so with the un sanctified: they drive on another design. Their own work is principally minded, and their carnal interest preferred to Christ's. They live to the flesh, and make provision for it, to satisfy its desires; Rom. xiii. 14.

2. It is the chiefest delight of a man devoted to God to see Christ's interest prosper and prevail. It doth him more good to see the church flourish, the gospel succeed, the souls of men brought in to God, and all things fitted to his blessed pleasure, than it would do him to prosper himself in the world; to do good to men's bodies, much more to their souls, is more pleasing to him than to be honorable or rich. To give is sweeter to him than to receive. His own matters he respects as lower things, that come not so near his heart as God's. But with the unsanctified it is not so: their prosperity and honors are most of their delight, and the absence of them their greatest trouble.

3. With a man that is truly devoted to God, the interest of Christ doth bear down all contradicting interest in the ordinary course of his life. As his own unrighteous righteousness, so his own renounced carnal interest is loss and dung to him in comparison of Christ's; Phil. iii. 8, 9. He cannot take himself to be a loser by that which is gain to the souls of men, and tendeth to promote the interest of his Lord. He serveth God with the first and best, and lets his own work stand by till Christ's be done, or rather owneth none but Christ's, his own dishonor being lighter to him than Christ's, and a ruined estate less grievous than a ruined church; therefore doth he first seek God's kingdom and its righteousness, (Matt. vi. 33.) and chooseth rather to neglect his flesh, his gain, his friends, his life, than the cause and work of Christ. It is far otherwise with the unsanctified: they will contentedly give Christ the most glorious titles, and full-mouthed commendations, (Luke vi. 46.) but they have one that is nearer their hearts than he: their carnal self must sway the sceptre. God shall have all that the flesh can spare: if he will be content to be served with its leavings, they will serve him; if not, they must be excused; they can allow him no more. The trying time is the parting time, when God or the world must needs be neglected. In such a strait, the righteous are still righteous; Rev. xxii. 11. But the unsteadfast in the covenant do manifest their unsteadfastness, and though they will not part with Christ professedly, nor without some witty distinctions and evasions, nor without great sorrow, and pretense of continued fidelity, yet part they will, and shift for themselves, and hold that they have as long as they can; Luke xviii. 23. In a word, the sanctified are heartily devoted to God, and live to him; and were they incapable of serving or enjoying him, their lives would afford them little content, whatever else they did possess. But the unsanctified are more strongly addicted to their flesh, and live to their carnal selves; and might they securely enjoy the pleasures of this world, they could easily spare the fruition of God, and could be as willing to be dispensed with for his spir-

itual service, as to perform it. And thus I have given you the true description of those that live to their Redeemer, as being not their own, and those that live to themselves, as if they were not his that bought them.

Having thus told you what the word saith, it followeth that we next inquire what your hearts say. You hear what you must be: will you now consider what you are? Are all the people that hear me this day devoted in heart and life to their Redeemer? Do you all live as Christ's, and not your own? If so, I must needs say it is an extraordinary assembly, and such as I had never the happiness to know. O that it were so indeed! that we might rejoice together, and magnify our Deliverer, instead of reprehending you, or lamenting your unhappiness! But, alas! we are not such strangers in the world as to be guilty of such a groundless judgment. Let us inquire more particularly into the case.

1. Are those so sincerely devoted to Christ? And do they so deny themselves, whose daily thoughts, and care, and labor, is, how they may live in more reputation and content, and may be better provided for the satisfying of their flesh? If they be low and poor, and their condition is displeasing to them, their greatest care is to repair it to their minds: if they be higher, and more wealthy, their business is to keep it, or increase it, that hunt after honor, and thirst after a thriving and more plenteous state; that can stretch their consciences to the size of all times, and humor those that they think may advance them, and be most humble servants to those above them, and contemptuously neglect whosoever is below them; that will put their hands to the feet of those that they hope to rise by, and put their feet on the necks of their subdued adversaries, and trample upon all that stand in their way; that applaud not men for their honesty, but their worldly honors; and will magnify that man, while he is capable of advancing them, whom they would have scorned, if Providence had laid him in the dust; that are friends to all that befriend their interests and designs, and enemies to the most upright that cross them in their course; that love not men so much because they love God, as because they love them. Are these devoted to God or to themselves? Is it for God, or themselves, that men so industriously scramble for honors, and places of government, or of gain? Will they use their offices or honors for God, that hunt after them as a prey, as if they had not burden enough already, nor talents enough to answer for neglecting? Are those men devoted to God, that can tread down his most unquestionable interest on earth, when it seems to be inconsistent with their own? Let the gospel go down; let the church be broken in pieces; let sound doctrine be despised, the ministers be hindered, or tried with vexations; let the souls of peo-

ple sink or swim,—rather than they should be hindered in the way of ambition! I shall leave it to the trial of another day, whether all the public actions of this age, with their effects, have been for God or for self. This doth not belong to my examination, but to his that will thoroughly perform it ere long, and search these matters to the quick, and open them to the world. There were never higher pretenses for God in an age than have been in this: had there been but answerable intentions and performances, his affairs and our own had been in much better case than they are; but enough of this. Should we descend to men's particular families and conversations, we should find the matter little better with the most. Are they all for God that follow the world so eagerly, that they cannot spare him a serious thought? An hour's time for his worship in their families, or in secret? That will see that their own work be done; but for the souls of those that are committed to their charge, they regard them not? Let them be ever so ignorant, they will not instruct them, nor cause them to read the word, or learn a catechism; nor will spend the Lord's peculiar day in such exercises; and it is much if they hinder not those that would. Is it for God that men give up their hearts to this world, so that they cannot have once a day, or week, to think soberly what they must do in the next? Or how they may be ready for their great approaching change. Is it for God that men despise his ministers, reject his word, abhor reformation, scorn a church government, and deride the persons that are addicted to his fear, and the families that call upon his name? These men will shortly understand a little better than now they will do, whether, indeed, they live to God or to themselves.

2. If you are devoted to God, what do you for him? Is it his business that you mind? How much of your time do you spend for him? How much of your speech is for him? How much of your estates yearly is serviceable to his interest? Let conscience speak, whether he have your studies and affections; let your families be witnesses whether he have your speeches and best endeavors; let the church witness what you have done for it; and the poor witness what you have done for them; and the souls of ignorant and ungodly men what you have done for them. Show by the work you have done whom you have lived to, God or your carnal selves. If, indeed, you have lived to God, something will be seen that you have done for him; nay, it is not a something that will serve the turn; it must be the best. Remember that it is by your works that you shall be judged, and not by your pretenses, professions, or compliments: your Judge already knows your case; he needs no witnesses; he will not be mocked with saying you are for him: show it, or saying it, will not serve.

Methinks, now, the consciences of some of you should prevent me, and preach over the sharper part of the sermon to yourselves, and say, 'I am the man that have lived to myself,' and so consider of the consequence of such a life; but I will leave this to your meditation, when you go home, and next proceed to the exhortative part of application.

Men, brethren, and fathers, the business that I come hither upon is to proclaim God's right to you, and all that is yours, even his new right of redemption, supposing that of creation; and to let you know, that you are all bought with a price, and therefore are not your own, but his that bought you, and must accordingly be dedicated and live to him. Honorable and Worshipful, and all men, of what degree soever, I do here, on the behalf and in the name of Christ, lay claim to you all, to your souls and bodies, to all your faculties, abilities, and interests, on the title of redemption: all is God's. Do you acknowledge his title, and consent unto his claim? What say you? Are you his, or are you not? Dare you deny it? If any man dare be so bold, I am here ready to make good the claim of Christ. If you dare not deny it, we must take it as confessed. Bear witness, all, that God laid claim to you and yours, and no man durst deny his title. I do next, therefore, require you, and command you, in his name, give him his own; render to God the things that are God's. Will you this day renounce your carnal selves, and freely confess you are not your own; and cheerfully and unreservedly resign yourselves to God, and say, as Jos. xxiv. 15., "As for me and my household, we will serve the Lord?" Do not ask what God will do with you, or how he will use you, or dispose of you. Trust him for that and obey his will. Fear not evil from the chiefest good, unless it be in neglecting or resisting him. Be sure of it, God will use you better than Satan would, or than this world would, or better than you have used, or would use yourselves. He will not employ you in dishonorable drudgeries, and then dash you in pieces. He will not seduce you with swinish sensualities, and keep you in play with childish vanities, till you drop into damnation before you are aware; nor will he lull you asleep in presumptuous security, till you unexpectedly awake in unquenchable fire. You need not fear such dealing as this from him: "His commandments are not grievous;" 1 John v. 3. "His yoke is easy, his burden is light, and tendeth to the perfect rest of the soul;" Matt. xi. 28—30. What say you? Will you hereafter be his, unfeignedly his? Resolvedly, unreservedly, and constantly his? Or will you not take heed, "that you refuse not him that speaketh;" Heb. xii. 25. Reject not, neglect not this offer, lest you never have another on the like terms again. He is willing to pardon all that is past, and put up with all the wrongs

that you have done him, so you will but repent of them; and now at last be heartily and entirely his; not only in tongue, but in deed and life. Well, I have proclaimed God's right to you; I have offered you his gracious acceptance: if yet you demur, or sleepily neglect it, or obstinately resist him, take that you get by it; remember you perish not without warning. The confession of Christ's right, which this day you have been forced to, shall remain as on record, to the confusion of your faces; and you shall then be forced to remember, though you had rather forget it, what now you are forced to confess, though you had rather you could deny it. But I am loath to leave you to this prognostic, or to part on terms so sad to your souls, and sad to me. I will add, therefore, some reasons to persuade you to submit; and though it be not in my power to follow them so to your hearts as to make them effectual, yet I shall do my part in propounding them, and leave them to God to set them home, beseeching him that maketh, new maketh, openeth, and softeneth hearts at his pleasure, to do these blessed works on yours, and to persuade you within, while I am persuading you without, that I may not lose my labor and my hopes, nor you your souls, nor God his due.

1. Consider the fullness of God's right to you: no creature is capable of the like. He made you of nothing, and, therefore, you have nothing which is not his. He redeemed you when you were fallen to worse than nothing. Had not Christ ransomed you by being a sacrifice for your sin, you had been hopelessly left to everlasting perdition. Give him, therefore, his own, which he hath so dearly bought; 1 Pet. i. 18.

2. Consider that you have no right of propriety to yourselves; if you have, how came you by it? Did you make yourselves? Did you redeem yourselves? Do you maintain and preserve yourselves? If you are your own, tell God you will not be beholden to him for his preservation. Why cannot you preserve yourselves in health, if you are your own? Why cannot you recover yourselves from sickness? Is it yourselves that gives power to your food to nourish you? to the earth to bear you, and furnish you with necessities? to the air to cool and recreate your spirits? If you are your own, save yourselves from sickness and death; keep back your age; deliver your souls from the wrath of God; answer his pure justice for your own sins; never plead the blood of a Redeemer, if you are your own. If you can do these things, I will yield that you are your own. But no man can ransom his soul from death; it cost a dearer price than so; Acts xx. 28. You are not debtors, therefore, to the flesh, to live after it, (Rom. viii. 12.) but to him that died, to subdue the flesh; Rom. vi. 11.

3. None else can claim any title to you, further than under God

upon his gift. Men did not create you or redeem you. "Be not, therefore, the servants of men," (1 Cor. vii. 23.) unless it be under Christ, and for him. Certainly Satan did not create you or redeem you: what right, then, hath he to you, that he should be served?

4. Seeing, then, that you are God's, and his alone, is it not the most heinous thievery to rob him of his right? If they must be hanged that rob men of so small a thing as earthly necessities, wherein they have but an improper derived propriety, what torments do those deserve that rob God of so precious a creature, that cost him so dear, and might be so useful, and wherein he hath so full and unquestionable propriety? The greatest, the richest, and wisest men that are trusted with most, are the greatest robbers on earth, if they live not to God, and shall have the greatest punishment.

5. Is it not incomparably more honorable to be God's than to be your own; and to live to him than to yourselves? The object and end doth nobilitate the act, and thereby the agent. It is more honorable to serve a prince than a ploughman. That man that least seeks his own honor or carnal interest, but most freely denieth it, and most entirely seeks the honor of God, is the most highly honored with God and good men, when self-seekers defraud themselves of their hopes. Most men think vilely, or at least suspiciously, of that man that seeks for honor to himself; they think if the matter were combustible, he need not to blow the fire so hard; if he were worthy of honor, his worth would attract it by a sweet magnetic power: so much industry, they think, is the most probable mark of indignity, and of some consciousness of it in the seeker's breast. If he attain some of his ends, men are ready to look on his honor but as alms, which he was fain to beg for before he got it. And could he make shift to ascend the throne, so much, in the eyes of the wisest men, would be detracted from his honor, as they did believe himself to have a hand in contriving it, *quod sequitur fugio*, &c. They honor him more that refuseth a crown when it is offered, than him that ambitiously aspireth after it, or rapaciously apprehendeth it. If they see a man much desire their applause, they think he needeth it rather than deserveth it. Solomon saith, "To search their own glory is not glory;" Prov. xxv. 27.

6. You can never have a better master than God, nor yet a sweeter employment than his service. There is nothing in him that may be the least discouragement to you, nor in his works that should be distasteful. The reason why the world thinks otherwise, is because of the distempered averseness of their souls. A sick stomach is no fit judge of the pleasantness of meats. To live to

God, is to live to the truest and highest delights. His kingdom is not in meats and drinks, but in righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost. His servants, indeed, are often troubled; but ask them the reason, and they will quickly tell you that it is not for being his servants, or for serving him too much; but for fear lest they are not his servants, or for serving him no better. It is not in his ways, or at least not for them, that they meet with their perplexities, but in stepping out of them, and wandering in their own. Many, besides the servants of God, do seek felicity and satisfaction to their minds, and some discover where it lieth; but only they attain it, and enjoy it.

But, on the contrary, he hath an ill master that is ruled by himself. A master that is blind, and proud, and passionate, that will lead you unto precipices, and thence deject you; that will most effectually ruin you when he thinks he is doing you the greatest good; whose work is bad, and his wages no better; that feedeth his servants in plenty but as swine, and in the day of famine denieth them the husks. Whatever you may now imagine while you are distracted with sensuality, I dare say, if ever God bring you to yourselves, you will consider that it is better to be in your Father's house, where the poorest servant hath bread enough, than to be fed with dreams and pictures, and to perish with hunger. Reject not God till you have found a better master.

7. If you will needs be your own, and seek yourselves, you disengage God from dealing with you as his in a gracious sense. If you will not trust him, nor venture yourselves upon his promise and conduct, but will shift for yourselves, then look to yourselves as well as you can; save yourselves in danger, cure your own diseases, quiet your own consciences, grapple with death in your own strength, plead your own cause in judgment, and save yourselves from hell if you can; and when you have done, go and boast of your own sufficiency and achievements, and tell men how little you were beholden to Christ. Wo to you, if, upon these provocations, God should give you over to provide for yourselves, and leave you without any other salvation than your own power is able to effect. Mark the connection of this sin and punishment in Deut. xxxii. 18—20. Of the Rock that begat thee thou art unmindful, and hast forgotten God that formed thee. And when the Lord saw it, he abhorred them, because of the provoking of his sons and of his daughters; and he said, "I will hide my face from them, I will see what their end shall be." As if he should say, I will see how well they can save themselves, and make them know by experience their own insufficiency.

8. Those men that seek themselves, and live to themselves, and not to God, are unfaithful and treacherous both to God and

man. As they neglect God in prosperity, so they do but flatter him in adversity; Psalm lxxviii. 34—37. And be that will be false to God, whose interest in him is so absolute, is unlikely to be true to men, whose interest in him is infinitely less; he that can shake off the great obligations of creation, redemption, preservation, and provision, which God layeth on him, is unlikely to be held by such slender obligations as he receives from men. I will never trust that man far, if I know him, that is false to his Redeemer. He that will sell his God, his Savior, his soul and heaven for a little sensuality, vain glory, or worldly wealth, I shall not wonder if he sell his best friend for a groat. Self-seeking men will take you for their friend no longer than you serve their turns; but if once you need them, or stand in their way, you shall find what they esteemed you for. He that is in haste to be rich, and thereupon respecteth persons for a piece of bread, that man will transgress, saith Solomon; Prov. xxviii. 20, 21.

9. Sanctification consisteth in your hearty resignation and living to God; and, therefore, you are unsanctified if you are destitute of this. "Without holiness none shall see God;" Heb. xii. 14. And what is holiness but our sincere dedication and devotedness to God? Being no longer common and unclean, but separated in resolution, affection, and conversation, from the world and our carnal selves to him. It is the office of the Holy Ghost to work you to this; and if you resist and refuse it, you do not soundly believe in the Holy Ghost, but, instead of believing in him, you fight against him.

10. You are verbally devoted to Christ in solemn covenant, entered into in baptism, and frequently renewed in the Lord's supper, and at other seasons. Did you not there solemnly, by your parents, resign yourself to Christ as his? And renounce the flesh, the world, and the devil, and promise to fight under Christ's banner against them to your lives' end? O happy person that performeth this covenant, and everlastingly miserable are they that do not. *Fides non recepta, sed custodita vivificat*, saith Cyprian. It is not covenant-making, without covenant-keeping, that is like to save you. Do you stand to the covenant that you made by your parents? Or do you disclaim it? If you disclaim it, you renounce your part in Christ, and his benefits in that covenant made over to you. If you stand to it, you must perform your promise, and live to God, to whom you were resigned. To take God's oath of allegiance so solemnly, and afterward to turn to his enemies which we renounced, is a rebellion that shall not be always unrevenged.

11. God's absolute dominion and sovereignty over us is the very foundation of all religion, even of that little which is found left

among infidels and pagans, much more evidently of the saving religion of Christians. He that dare say he believeth not this, will never, sure, have the face to call himself a Christian. Is it not a matter of most sad consideration, that ever so many millions should think to be saved by a doctrine which they believe not, or by a religion that never went deeper than the brain, and is openly contradicted by the tenor of their lives? Is a true religion enough to save you, if you be not true to that religion? How do men make shift to quiet their consciences in such gross hypocrisy? Is there a man to be found in this congregation that will not confess that he is rightfully his Redeemer's? But hath he indeed their hearts, their time, their strength, and their interest? Follow some of them from morning to night, and you shall not hear one serious word for Christ, nor see any serious endeavors for his interest; and yet men will profess that they are his. How sad a case is it, that men's own confessions should condemn them, and that which they called their religion should judge them to that everlasting misery which they thought it would have saved them from! And how glorious would the Christian religion appear if men were true to it; if Christ's doctrine had its full impress on their hearts, and were expressed in their lives! Is he not an excellent person that denieth himself, and doth all for God? that goeth on no business but God's? that searcheth out God's interest in every part of his calling and employment; and intendeth that, "whether he eat or drink, or whatever he doth, doth all to the glory of God;" (1 Cor. x. 31.) that can say, as Paul, "I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me?" (Gal. ii. 20.) and "What things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ: yea, doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ?" (Phil. iii. 7, 8.) and "For me to live is Christ, and to die is gain?" Phil. i. 21. Perhaps you think that the degree of these examples is inimitable by us; but I am sure all that will be saved must imitate them in the truth.

12. Self-seeking is self-losing, and delivering up yourself, and all you have, to God, is the only way to save yourselves and to secure all. The more you are his, the more you are your own indeed; and the more you deliver to him, and expend for him, the greater is your gain. These paradoxes are familiar, tried truths to the true believer; these are his daily food and exercise, which seem to others such scorpions, as they dare not touch, or such stones as they are not able to digest. He knoweth that self-humbling is the true self-exalting, and self-exalting is the infallible way to be brought low; Luke xiv. 11. and xviii. 14. Matt. xxiii. 12. He be-

lieth that there is a losing of life which saves it, and a saving of it which certainly loseth it; Matt. x. 39. and xvi. 25. O that I could reach the hearts of self-seekers, that spend their care and time for their bodies, and live not unto God! That I were but able to make them see the issue of their course, and what it would profit them to "win all the world and lose their own souls." O, all you busy men of this world, hearken to the proclamation of him that bought you—"Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters! Buy wine and milk without money and without price. Wherefore do you spend money for that which is not bread, and your labor for that which satisfieth not? Hearken diligently to me, and eat ye that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness. Incline your ear, and come unto me: hear, and your soul shall live, and I will make an everlasting covenant with you;" Isaiah lv. 1—3. O, sirs, what a deal of care and labor do you lose! How much more gainfully might your lives be improved? Godliness with contentment "is the great gain;" 1 Tim. vi. 9. That which you now think you make your own, will shortly prove to be least your own; and that is most lost which you so carefully labor for. You that are now so idly busy in gathering together the treasure of an ant-hillock, and building children's tottering piles, do you forget that the foot of death is coming to spurn it all abroad, and tread down you and it together? You spend the day of life and visitation in painting your phantasies with the images of felicity, and in dressing yourselves, and feathering your nest with that which you impiously steal from God; and do you forget that the night of blackness is at hand, when God will undress you of your temporary contents, and deplume you of all your borrowed bravery? How easily, how speedily, how certainly will he do it! Read over your case in Luke xii. 16—22. How can you make shift to read such texts, and not perceive that they speak to you? When you are pulling down and building up, and contriving what to do with your fruits, and saying to yourselves, 'I have so much now as may serve me so many years; I will take mine ease, eat, drink, and be merry;' remember, then, the conclusion; but God said unto him, "Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee. Then whose shall these things be which thou hast provided?" So is he that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich towards God. 'Are these things yours or mine? (saith God.) Whose are they? If they are yours, keep them now if you can: either stay with them, or take them with you.' But God will make you know that they are his, and disrobe such men as thieves, who are adorned with that which is none of their own. 'This honor (saith God) is mine; thou hast stolen it from me: this wealth is mine; this life, and all is mine;'

only thyself he will not own. They shall require thy soul that have conquered and ruled it. Though it was his by the right of creation and redemption, yet, seeing it was not his by a free dedication, he will not own it as to everlasting salvation, but say, "Depart from me; I know you not, ye workers of iniquity;" Matt. vii. 23. O with what hearts, then, will self-seeking gentlemen part with their honors and estates, and the earthly-minded with their beloved possessions! when he that resigned all to God, and devoted himself and all to his service, shall find his consumed estate to be increased, his neglected honor abundantly repaired, and in this life he shall receive an hundred fold, and in the world to come eternal life; Matt. x. 30. John iv. 56. 1 Tim. vi. 12. 19.

13. Lastly; consider, when judgment comes, inquiry will be made whether you have lived as your own, or as his that bought you. Then he will require his own with improvement; Luke xix. 25. The great business of that day will be, not so much to search after particular sins, or duties, which were contrary to the scope of heart and life, but to know whether you lived to God, or to your flesh; whether your time, and care, and wealth, were expended for Christ in his members and interest, or for your carnal selves; Matt. xxv. Inasmuch as you did it not to these, you did it not to him. You that Christ hath given authority to, shall then be accountable whether you improved it to his advantage. You that he hath given honor to, must then give account whether you improved it to his honor. In the fear of God, sirs, cast up your accounts in time, and bethink you what answer will then stand good. It will be a doleful hearing to a guilty soul, when Christ shall say, 'I gave thee thirty or forty years' time; thy flesh had so much in eating and drinking, and sleeping, and laboring, in idleness and vain talking, and recreations, and other vanities; but where was my part? How much was laid out for the promotion of my glory? I lent you so much of the wealth of the world; so much was spent on your backs, and so much on your bellies; so much on costly toys or superfluities; so much in revengeful suits and contentions; and so much was left behind for your posterity; but where was my part? How much was laid out to further the gospel, and to relieve the souls or the bodies of your brethren? I gave thee a family, and committed them to thy care to govern them for me, and fit them for my service; but how didst thou perform it?' O, brethren, bethink you in time what answer to make to such interrogatories: your Judge hath told you that your doom must then pass according as you have improved your talents for him; and that he that hideth his talent, though he give God his own, "shall be cast into utter darkness, where is weeping and gnashing of teeth;" Matt. xxv. 30. How easily will Christ, then,

evince his right in you, and convince you that it was your duty to have lived unto him? Do you think, sirs, that you shall then have the face to say, 'I thought, Lord, that I had been made and re-deemed for myself? I thought I had nothing to do on earth, but live in as much plenty as I could, and pleasure to my flesh, and serve thee on the by, that thou mightest continue my prosperity, and save me when I could keep the world no longer? I knew not that I was thine, and should have lived to thy glory?' If any of you plead thus, what store of arguments hath Christ to silence you! He will then convince you that his title to you was not questionable. He will prove that thou wast his by thy very being, and fetch unanswerable arguments from every part and faculty: he will prove it from his incarnation, his life of humiliation, his bloody sweat, his crown of thorns, his cross, his grave. He that had wounds to show after his resurrection, for the convincing of a doubting disciple, will have such scars to show then, as shall suffice to convince a self-excusing rebel. All these shall witness that he was thy rightful Lord. He will prove it also from the discoveries of his word, from the warnings of his ministers, from the mercies which thou receivedst from him, that thou wast not ignorant of his right, and of thy duty; or at least not ignorant for want of means. He will prove it from thy baptismal covenant and renewed engagements. The congregation can witness that you did promise to be his, and seal to it by the reception of both his sacraments. And as he will easily prove his right, so will he as easily prove that you denied it to him. He will prove it from your works, from the course of your life, from the stream of your thoughts, from your love, your desires, and the rest of the affections of your disclosed hearts.

O, brethren, what a day will that be, when Christ shall come in person, with thousands of his angels, to sit in judgment on the rebellious world, and claim his due, which is now denied him! When plaintiff and defendant, witnesses and jurors, counsellors and justices, judges, and all the princes on earth, shall stand equal before the impartial Judge, expecting to be sentenced to their unchangeable state! Then, if a man should ask you, 'What think you now, sir, of living to God? Is it better to be devoted to him, or to the flesh? Which now do you take for the better master? What would you do now if it were all to do again? What would you then say to such a question? How would you answer it? Would you make as light of it as now you do?' O, sirs, you may hear these things now from your poor fellow-creature, as proud-hearted gallants, or as self-conceited deriders, or as besotted worldlings, or senseless blocks, or secret infidels, that as those (Deut. xxix. 19.) do bless themselves in their hearts, and say, 'We shall have peace, though we walk in the imagination of our hearts.'

But then you will hear them as trembling prisoners. Read the 20th verse at leisure. Such a sight will work when words will not, especially words not believed, nor considered of. When you shall see the God that you disowned, the Redeemer whom you neglected, the glory which you forfeited, by preferring the pleasures of the flesh before it, the saints triumphing whom you refused to imitate, and a doleful eternity of misery to be remedilessly endured, then saints will seem wiser men in your eyes; and how gladly would you then be such! But O, too late! What a thing is it, that men who say they believe such a judgment, and everlasting life and death, as all Christians profess to do, can yet read, and hear, and talk of such things as insensibly as if they were dreams or fables! I know it is the nature of sin to deceive, and of a sinful heart to be too willing of such deceiving; and it is the business of Satan by deceiving to destroy, and with the most specious baits to angle for souls; and therefore I must expect that those of you that are taken, and are the nearest to the pit, should be least fearful of the danger, and most confident to escape, though you are conscious that you live not to God, but to yourselves. But for my part, I have read and considered what God saith in his word, and I have found such evidence of its certain truth, that I heartily wish that I might rather live on a dunghill, and be the scorn of the world, and spend my few days in beggary and calamity, than that I should stand before the Lord, my Judge, in the case of that man, whatever he be, that is not in heart and life devoted unto God, but liveth to his flesh. For I know that if we live after the flesh, we shall die; Rom. viii. 13. I had rather lie here in Lazarus's poverty, and want the compassion and relief of man, than to be clothed with the best, and fare deliciously, and hereafter be denied a drop of water to cool the flames of the wrath of God.

I confess this is likely to seem but harsh and ungrateful preaching to many of you. Some pleasant jingles, or witty sayings, or shreds of reading, and pretty cadency of neat expressions, were likelier to be accepted, and procure applause with them who had rather have their ears and fantasy tickled than rubbed so roughly, and be roused from their ease and pleasing dreams. But shall I preach for myself, while I pretend to be preaching you from yourselves to God? Shall I seek myself, while I am preaching of the everlasting misery of self-seekers? God forbid. Sirs, I know the terrors of the Lord, (2 Cor. v. 11.) I believe, and therefore speak. Were I a Christian no deeper than the throat, I would fish for myself, and study more to please you than to save you. I love not to make a needless stir in men's consciences, nor to trouble their peace by a doctrine which I do not believe myself. But I believe that our Judge is even at the door, and that we shall shortly see

him coming in his glory, and the host of heaven attending him with acclamations. In the mean time, your particular doom draws on; the fashion of all these things passeth away: as those seats will anon be empty when you are departed, so it is but a moment till all your habitations shall change their possessors, and the places of your abode, and too great delight, shall know you no more. I must needs speak to you as to transient, itinerant mortals, who must, ere long, be carried on men's shoulders to the dust, and there be left by those that must shortly follow you; then farewell honors and fleshly delights; farewell all the accommodations and contents of this world. O that you had sooner bid them farewell! Had you lived to Christ as you did to them, he would not so have turned you off, nor have left your dislodged souls to utter desolation.

In a word, as sure as the word of God is true, if you own him not now as your Lord and Sovereign, he will not own you then as his chosen to salvation. And if now you live not to him, you shall not then live with him. "Be not deceived, God is not mocked. For whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh, shall of the flesh reap corruption, but he that soweth to the Spirit, shall of the Spirit reap everlasting life;" Gal. v. 7, 8. "Consider this, ye that forget God, lest he should tear you in pieces, and there be none to deliver you;" Psalm l. 22.

Beloved hearers, believe as you pretend to believe, and then live as you do believe. If you believe that you are not your own, but his that made you, and bought you with a price, and that he will thus try you for your lives and everlasting comforts on this question, whether you have lived to him, or to yourselves, then live as men that do indeed believe it. Let your religion be visible, as well as audible, and let those that see your lives, and observe the scope of your endeavors, see that you believe it. But if you believe not these things, but are infidels in your hearts, and think you shall feel neither pain nor pleasure when this life is ended, but that man dieth as the beast, then I cannot wonder if you live as you believe. He that thinks he shall die like a dog, is like enough to live like a dog, even in his filthiness, and in snarling for the bones of worldly vanities, which the children do contemn.

Having spoken thus much by way of exhortation, I shall add a few words for your more particular direction, that you may see to what my exhortation doth tend, and it may not be lost.

1. Be sure that you look to the uprightness of your heart, in this great business of devoting yourselves to God; especially see,

1. That you discern, and soundly believe, that excellency in God which is not in the creature, and that perfect felicity in his

love, and in the promised glory, which will easily pay for all your losses.

2. And that upon a deliberate comparing him with the pleasures of this world, you do resolutely renounce them, and dedicate yourselves to him.

3. And especially that you search carefully lest any reserve should lurk in your hearts, and you should not deliver up yourselves to him absolutely, for life and death, for better and worse, but should still retain some hopes of an earthly felicity, and not take the unseen felicity for your portion. "It is the lot of the wicked to have their portion in this life;" Psalm xvii. 14. And let me here warn you of one delusion, by which many thousands have perished, and cheated themselves out of their everlasting hopes. They think that it is only some grosser disgraceful sins, as swearing, drunkenness, whoredom, injustice, &c., that will prove men's perdition, and because they are not guilty of these, they are secure, when, as it is the predominancy of the interest of the flesh against the interest of God in their hearts and lives, that is the certain evidence of a state of damnation, which way soever it be that this is expressed. Many a civil gentleman hath his heart more addicted to his worldly interest, and less to God, than some whoresongers and drunkards. If you live with good reputation for civility, yea, for extraordinary ingenuity, yea, for religious zeal, and no disgraceful vice is perceived in your lives, yet if your hearts be on these things which you possess, and you love your present enjoyments better than God, and the glory that he hath promised, your case is as dangerous as the publicans' and harlots.' You may spend your days in better reputation, but you will end them in as certain desolation as they. The question is only whether God have your hearts and lives, and not whether you denied them to him with a plausible civility. Nay, it is merely for their carnal selves to preserve their reputation, that some men do forbear those grosser crimes, when yet God hath as little of them as of the more visible profane. "Love not the world, nor the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him;" 1 John ii. 15.

2. If you are wholly God's, live wholly to him; at least do not stint him, and grudge him your service. It is grown the common conceit of the world, that a life of absolute dedication to God is more ado than needs. 'What needs all this ado?' say they. 'Cannot you be saved with less ado than this?' I will now demand of these men but an answer to these few sober questions:

1. Do you fear giving more to God than his due? Is not all his own? And how can you give him more than all?

2. He is not so backward in giving to you, that owes you nothing, but gives you plenty, variety, and continuance of all the good you enjoy; and do you think you well requite him?

3. Christ said not of his life and precious blood, it is too much; and will you say of your poor, unprofitable service, it is too much?

4. Whom will you give that to which you spare from God? That time, and study, and love, and labor? To any that hath more right to it, or better deserves it, or will better reward you than he will do?

5. Are you afraid of being losers by him? Have you cause for such fears? Is he unfaithful or unable to perform his promises? Will you repent when you come to heaven that you did too much to get it? Will not that blessedness pay you to the full?

6. What if you had no wages but your work? Is it not better to live to God than to man? Is not purity better than impurity? If feasting be grievous, it is because you are sick. If the mire be your pleasure, it is because you are swine, and not because the condition is desirable.

7. Will it comfort you more in the reckoning and review to have laid out yourselves for God, or for the world? Will you then wish that you had done less for heaven, or for earth? Sirs, these questions are easily answered, if you are but willing to consider them.

8. Doth it beseem those to be afraid of giving God too much, that are such bankrupts as we are, and are sure that we shall not give him the twentieth part of his due, if we do the best we can, and when the best, that are scorned by the world for their forwardness, do abhor themselves for their backwardness? Yea, could we do all, we are but unprofitable servants, and should do but our duty; Luke xvii. 10. Alas! how little cause have we to fear lest we should give God too much of our hearts, or of our lives!

3. If you are not your own, remember that nothing else is your own. What can be more your own than yourselves?

1. Your parts and abilities of mind or body are not your own; use them, therefore, for him that owneth them.

2. Your authority and dignities are not your own; see, therefore, that you make the best of them for him that lent them you.

3. Your children themselves are not your own; design them for the utmost of his service that trusts you with them; educate them in that way as they may be most serviceable to God. It is the great wickedness of too many of our gentry, that they prepare their posterity only to live plenteously, and in credit in the world, but not to be serviceable to God or the commonwealth. Design them, all that are capable, to magistracy or ministry, or some useful way of life. And whatever be their employment, endeavor to

possess them with the fear of the Lord, that they may devote themselves to him. Think not the preaching of the gospel a work too low for the sons of the noblest person in the land. It would be an excellent furtherance to the work of the gospel if noblemen and gentlemen would addict those sons to the ministry that are fit for it, and can be spared from the magistracy. They might have more respect from their people, and easier rule them, and might better win them with bounty than poor men can do. They need not to contend with them for tithes or maintenance.

4. If you are not your own, your whole families are not your own. Use them, therefore, as families that are dedicated to God.

5. If you are not your own, then your wealth is not your own. Honor God, therefore, with your substance, and with the first-fruits of your increase; Prov. iii. 9. Do you ask how? Are there no poor people that want the preaching of the gospel for want of means, or other furtherance? Are there no godly scholars that want means to maintain them at the universities, to fit them for this work? Are there no poor neighbors about you that are ignorant, that if you buy them Bibles and catechisms, and hire them to learn them, might come to knowledge and to life? Are there no poor children that you might put apprentices to godly masters, where soul and body might both have helps? The poor you have always with you. It is not for want of objects for your charity: if you hide your talents, or consume them on yourselves, the time is coming when it would do you more good to have laid them out to your Master's use than in pampering your flesh.

Some grudge that God should have the tenths, that is, that they should be consecrated to the maintenance of his service. But little do these consider that all is his, and must all be accounted for. Some question whether now there be such a sin as sacrilege in being, but little do they consider that every sin is a kind of sacrilege. When you dedicated yourself to God, you dedicated all you had, and it was God's before; do not take it from him again. Remember the halving of Ananias, and give God all.

Obj. But must we not provide for our families?

Ans. Yea, because God requires it, and, in so doing, you render it to him. That is given to him which is expended in obedience to him, so be it you still prefer his most eminent interest.

Lastly, if you are not your own, then must not your works be principally for yourselves, but for him that owneth you. As the scope of your lives must be to the honor of your Lord, so be sure that you hourly renew these intentions. When you set your foot out of your doors, ask whether your business you go upon be for God. When you go to your rest, examine yourselves what you have done that day for God; especially let no opportunity overslip you wherein

you may do him extraordinary service. You must so perform the very labors of your callings, that they may be ultimately for God : so love your dearest friends and enjoyments, that it be God that is principally loved in them.

More particularly as to the business of the day, what need I say more than in a word to apply this general doctrine to your special works ?

1. If the honorable judges and the justices will remember that they are God's, and not their own, what a rule and stay will it be to them for their work ! What an answer will it afford them against all solicitations from carnal self, or importunate friends ! viz. I am not mine own, nor come I hither to do mine own work ; I cannot therefore dispose of myself or it, but must do as he that owns me doth command me. How would this also incite them to promote Christ's interest with their utmost power, and faithfully to own the causes which he owneth !

2. If all counsellors, and solicitors of causes, did truly take themselves for God's, and not their own, they durst not plead for nor defend a cause they knew which God disowneth. They would remember that what they do against the innocent, or speak against a righteous cause, is done and said against their Lord, from whom they may expect, ere long, to hear, 'Inasmuch as you said or did this against the least of these, you said or did it against me.' God is the great patron of innocency, and the pleader of every righteous cause ; and he that will be so bold as to plead against him, had need of a large fee to save him harmless. Say not it is your calling which you must live by, unless you, that once listed yourselves in your baptism under Christ, will now take pay, and make it your profession to fight against him. The emptier your purses are of gain so gotten, the richer you are ; or at least the fuller they are, you are so much the poorer. As we that are ministers do find by experience, that it was not without provocation from us that God of late hath let loose so many hands, and pens, and tongues against us, though our calling is more evidently owned by God, than any one in the world besides, so I doubt not but you may find, upon due examination, that the late contempt which hath been cast upon your profession is a reproof of your guilt from God, who did permit it. Had lawyers and divines less lived to themselves, and more to God, we might have escaped, if not the scourge of reproachful tongues, yet at least the lashes of conscience. To deal freely with you, gentlemen, it is a matter that they who are strangers to your profession can scarce put any fair construction upon, that the worst cause, for a little money, should find an advocate among you. This driveth the standers by upon this harsh

dilemma, to think that either your understandings or your consciences are very bad. If, indeed, you so little know a good cause from a bad, then it must needs tempt men to think you very unskillful in your profession. The seldom and smaller differences of divines, in a more sublime and mysterious profession, is yet a discovery so far of their ignorance, and is imputed to their disgrace. But when almost every cause, even the worst that comes to the bar, shall have some of you for it, and some against it, and in the most palpable cases you are some on one side, and some on the other, the strange difference of your judgments doth seem to betray their weakness. But if you know the causes to be bad which you defend, and to be good which you oppose, it more evidently betrays a deplorable conscience. I speak not of your innocent or excusable mistakes in cases of great difficulty; nor yet of excusing a cause bad in the main from unjust aggravations: but when money will hire you to plead for injustice against your own knowledge, and to use your wits to defraud the righteous, and spoil his cause, or vex him with delays, for the advantage of your own unrighteous client, I would not have your conscience for all your gains, nor your account to make for all the world. It is sad, that any known unrighteous cause should have a professed Christian, in the face of a Christian judicature, to defend it, and Satan should plead by the tongues of men so deeply engaged to Christ: but it is incomparably more sad that almost every unjust cause should find a patron; and no contentious, malicious person should be more ready to do wrong, than some lawyers to defend him, or a (dear-bought) fee! Did you honestly obey God, and speak not a word against your judgment, but leave every unjust man to defend his own cause, what peace would it bring to your consciences; what honor to your now reproached profession; what relief to the oppressed; and what an excellent cure to the troublesome contentions of proud or malicious men!

3. To your juries and witnesses I shall say but this: Ycu also are not your own; and he that owneth you hath told you, "That he will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain." It is much into your hands that the law hath committed the cause of the just: should you betray it by perjury and false witnesses, while there is a conscience in your guilty breast, and a God in heaven, you shall not want a witness of your sin, or a revenger of the oppressed, if the blood of Christ on your sound repentance do not rescue you.

4. If plaintiff and defendant did well consider that they are not their own, they would not be too prone to quarrels, but would lose their right, when God, the chief proprietor, did require it. Why

do you not rather take wrong, and suffer yourselves to be defrauded, than to wrong and defraud, and that your brethren? 1 Cor. vi. 7—9.

To conclude: I earnestly entreat you all, that have heard me this day, that, when you go home, you will betake yourselves to a sober consideration of the claim that God hath laid to you, and the right he hath in you, and all that you have; and resolve, without any further delay, to give him his own; and give it not to his enemies and yours. When you see the judgment set and the prisoners waiting to receive their sentence, remember with what inconceivable glory and terror your Judge will shortly come to demand his due; and what an inquiry must be made into the tenor of your lives! As you see the eclipsed sun withdraw its light,* so remember how before this dreadful final judgment, the sun and moon, and the whole frame of nature, shall be dissolved! And how God will withdraw the light of his countenance from those that have neglected him in the day of their visitation! As ever you would be his, then see that you be his now; own him as your absolute Lord, if you expect he should own you then as his people. Woe to you that ever you were born! if you put God then to distraint you for his due, and to take that up in your punishment, which you denied to give him in voluntary obedience. You would all be his in the time of your extremity; then you cry to him as your God for deliverance. Hear him now, if you would then be heard: live to him now, and live with him forever. A Popish priest can persuade multitudes of men and women to renounce the very possession of worldly goods, and the exercise of their outward callings, in a mistaken devotedness to God. May not I, then, hope to prevail with you to devote yourselves, with the fruit of your callings and possessions, to his unquestionable service? Will the Lord of mercy but fasten these persuasions upon your hearts, and cause them to prevail, what a happy day will this prove to us! God will have his own, the church will have your utmost help, the souls of those about you will have the fruit of your diligence and good examples, the commonwealth will have the fruit of your fidelity, the poor will have the benefit of your charity, I shall have the desired end of my labor, and yourselves will have the great and everlasting gain.

* This sermon was preached at the time of the eclipse.

CHRISTIAN READER,

WHEN I had resolved, at the desire of the Honorable Judge of Assize, to publish the foregoing sermon, I remembered that, about six years before, I had preached another on the like occasion, on a subject so like, and to so like a purpose, that I conceived it not unfit to be annexed to the former. I have endeavored to show you, in both these sermons, that Christ may be preached without Antinomianism; that terror may be preached without unwarrantable preaching the law; that the gospel is not a mere promise, and that the law is not so terrible as it is to the rebellious; as also what that superstructure is, which is built on the foundation of general redemption rightly understood; and how ill we can preach Christ's dominion in his universal propriety and sovereignty, or yet persuade men to sanctification and subjection, without this foundation. I have labored to fit all, or almost all, for matter and manner, to the capacity of the vulgar. And though, for the matter, it is as necessary to the greatest, yet it is for the vulgar, principally, that I publish it; and had rather it might be numbered with those books which are carried up and down the country from door to door in pedlers' packs, than with those that lie on booksellers' stalls, or are set up in the libraries of learned divines. And to the same use would I design the most of my published labors, should God afford me time and ability, and contentious brethren give me leave.

RICHARD BAXTER.

August 7, 1654.

A SERMON

OF THE

ABSOLUTE SOVEREIGNTY OF CHRIST;

AND THE

NECESSITY OF MAN'S SUBJECTION, DEPENDENCE,
AND CHIEFEST LOVE TO HIM.

PREACHED BEFORE THE JUDGES OF ASSIZE AT WORCESTER.

PSALM ii. 10, 11, 12.

BE WISE NOW, THEREFORE, O YE KINGS; BE INSTRUCTED, YE JUDGES
OF THE EARTH. SERVE THE LORD WITH FEAR, AND REJOICE WITH
TREMBLING, &c.

To waste this precious hour in an invective against injustice and its associates, is none of my purpose; they are sins so directly against the principles in nature, so well known, I believe, to you all, and so commonly preached against upon these occasions, that, upon the penalty of forfeiting the credit of my discretion, I am bound to make choice of a more necessary subject. What! Have we need to spend our time and studies to persuade Christians from bribery, perjury, and oppression; and from licking up the vomit which pagans have cast out? And that in an age of blood and desolation, when God is taking the proudest oppressors by the throats, and raising monuments of justice upon the ruins of the unjust? And I would fain believe that no corrupt lawyers do attend your judicatures, and that Jezebel's witnesses dwell not in our country, nor yet a jury that fear not an oath. I have therefore chosen another subject, which, being of the greatest moment, can never be unseasonable; even to proclaim him who is constituted the King and Judge of all, to acquaint you with his pleasure, and to demand your subjection.

The chief scope of the Psalm is, to foretell the extent and prevalence of the kingdom of Christ, admonishing his enemies to submit to his government, deriding the vanity of their opposing pro-

jects and fury, and forewarning them of their ruin if they come not in.

The verses which I have read are the application of the foregoing prediction, by a serious admonition to the proudest offenders: they contain, 1. The persons admonished, "kings and judges." 2. Their duty: 1. In general to God, "serve him;" with the adjuncts annexed: 1. Rejoicing. 2. Fear and trembling. 2. More especially their duty to the Son, "kiss him." 3. The motives to this duty. 1. Principally and directly expressed, "lest he be angry," which anger is set forth by the effect, "and ye perish;" which perishing is aggravated, 1. From the suddenness and unexpectedness, "in the way." 2. From the dreadfulness, "kindled." 1. It is fire, and will kindle and burn. 2. A little of it will produce this sad effect. 3. It will be woe to those that do not escape it; which woe is set forth by the contrary happiness of those that by submission do escape. 2. The motives subservient and implied are in the monitory words, "be wise, be learned," *q. d.* else you will show and prove yourselves men of ignorance and madness, unlearned and unwise.

Some questions here we should answer for explication of the terms: as,

1. Whether the Lord, in verse 11, and the Son, in verse 12, be both meant of Christ the Second Person?

2. Whether the anger here mentioned be the anger of the Father or the Son, "lest he be angry?" I might spend much time here to little purpose, in showing you the different judgment of divines of these, when in the issue there is no great difference, whichever way we take them.

3. What is meant by "kissing the Son?" I answer, According to its threefold object, it hath a threefold duty contained in it.

1. We kiss the feet in token of subjection; so must we kiss the Son.

2. We kiss the hand in token of dependence; so must we kiss the hand of Christ; that is, resign ourselves to him, and expect all our happiness and receivings from him.

3. We kiss the mouth in token of love and friendship; and so also must we kiss the Son.

4. What is meant by "perishing in the way?" I answer, (omitting the variety of interpretations,) It is their sudden unexpected perishing in the heat of their rage, and in pursuit of their designs against the kingdom of Christ.

I know no other terms of any great difficulty here.

Many observations might be hence raised: as,

1. Serving the Lord is the great work and business that the world hath to do.

2. This service should be accompanied with rejoicing.

3. So should it also with fear and trembling.

4. There is no such opposition between spiritual joy and fear, but that they may and must consist together.

5. Scripture useth familiar expressions concerning man's communion with Christ, such as this, "kiss the Son."

6. There is anger in God, or that which we cannot conceive better of than under the notion of anger.

7. There is a way to kindle this anger; it is man that kindleth it.

8. The way to kindle it chiefly is not kissing the Son.

9. The kindling of it will be the perishing of the sinner.

10. The enemies of Christ shall perish suddenly and unexpectedly.

11. A little of God's anger will utterly undo them.

12. They are blessed men that escape it, and miserable that must feel it.

13. It is therefore notorious folly to neglect Christ, and stand out.

14. Kings, judges, and rulers of the earth, are the first men that Christ summons in, and the chief in the calamity if they stand out.

But I will draw the scope of the text, into this one doctrine; in the handling whereof I shall spend the time allotted me.

Doct. No power or privilege can save that man from the fearful, sudden, consuming wrath of God, that doth not unfeignedly love, depend upon, and subject himself unto the Lord Jesus Christ.

If they be the greatest kings and judges, yet if they do not kiss the mouth, the hand, the feet of Christ, his wrath will be kindled, and they will perish in the way of their rebellion and neglect.

In handling this point, I shall observe this order:—

1. I will show you what this love, dependence, and subjection are.

2. What wrath it is that will thus kindle and consume them.

3. Why this kissing the Son is the only way to escape it.

4. Why no power or privilege else can procure their escape.

5. The application.

For the first I shall only give you a naked description, wishing that I had time for a fuller explication.

1. Subjection to Christ is, the acknowledging of his absolute sovereignty, both as he is God, Creator, and as Redeemer over all the world, and particularly ourselves; and a hearty consent to this his sovereignty; especially that he be our Lord, and his laws our rule, and a delivering up ourselves to him to be governed accordingly.

2. This dependence on Christ is, when acknowledging the sufficiency of his satisfaction, and his power and willingness to save all that receive him, manifested in his free, universal offer in the gospel, we do heartily accept him for our only Savior, and, accordingly, renouncing all other, do wait upon him believingly for the benefits of his sufferings and office, and the performance of his faithful covenant to us, in restoring us to all the blessings which we lost, and advancing us to a far greater everlasting glory.

3. This affection to Christ is, when, in the knowledge and sense of his love to us, both common and especial, and of his own excellency, and the blessedness of enjoying him, and the Father and Life by him, our hearts do choose him, and the Father by him, as the only happiness, and accordingly love him above all things in the world.

As this threefold description containeth the sum of the gospel, so hath it nothing but what is of necessity to sound Christianity. If any one of these three be not found in thy heart, either have I little skill in divinity, or thou hast no true Christianity, nor canst be saved in that condition.

Object. But do not the Scriptures make believing the condition of the covenant? But here is a great deal more than believing.

Ans. Sometimes faith is taken in a narrower sense, and then it is not made the sole condition of the new covenant; but repentance, and forgiving others, are joined with it, as conditions of our forgiveness; and obedience and perseverance, as conditions of our continued justification and salvation. But when faith is made the sole condition of the covenant, then it comprehendeth essentially, (not only supposeth as precedent or concomitant,) if not all three, yet at least the two first of the afore-described qualifications, viz. dependence and subjection, which, if it were well understood, would much free the common sort of Christians from their soul-destroying mistakes, and the body of divinity from a multitude of common errors, and our religion from much of that reproach of Solifidianism which is cast upon it by the Papists.

2. I must be as brief in opening the second thing, viz. What wrath it is that will thus kindle and consume them. What wrath is in God we need not here trouble ourselves to inquire, but only what is intimated in the threats or curses of the covenants. As there are two covenants, so each hath his proper penalty for its violation.

1. Then, till men do come in and submit to Christ, they lie under the wrath of God for all their sins, as they are against the covenant of works, or they are liable to the curse of that covenant: Christ's death hath taken away the curse of that covenant; not

absolutely from any man, but conditionally, which becomes absolute when the condition is performed. The elect themselves are not by nature under the covenant of grace, but remain under the curse of the first covenant till they come in to Christ.

2. Whosoever rejecteth or neglecteth his grace, and so finally breaketh the new covenant, must also bear the curse or penalty thereof, besides all the former, which is a far greater curse, even as the blessings of this covenant are far greater than those of the first. It was a heavy punishment to be cast out of Paradise, and from the presence and favor of God, and to be cursed by him, and subjected to eternal death, and all creatures below cursed for our sakes, to bear all those curses and plagues threatened in Deut. xxvii. and xxviii., and to have the wrath of God smoke against us, &c., as Deut. xxix. 20. "But of how much sorer punishment shall he be thought worthy that doth tread under foot the blood of this covenant, and do despite to the Spirit of grace?" Heb. x. 28, 29. It is true, that for all other sins the wrath of God cometh upon the children of disobedience, (or unpersuadableness,) that is, on them that will not be persuaded to obey the Lord Christ; Eph. v. 6. But it is on no other with us; for this is the condemnation, "that light is come into the world, and men love darkness rather than light;" John i. 19.

3. Why is this kissing the Son, that is, loving, depending on, and submitting to him, the only way to escape these curses?

Ans. 1. The most proper and primary reason which can be given, is, the will of the Great Lawgiver, who, having absolute sovereignty over us, might dispose of us as he please, and make us such laws and conditions as seem best to his wisdom, upon which our justification and salvation should depend: he hath resolved that this shall be the only condition and way; and that, as no man shall be justified by a mere Christ, or his death abstracted from faith, (that is, of age and use of reason,) so this faith shall be the condition upon which they shall be justified; or, as a Christ neglected shall save no man, so the accepting or receiving of him shall justify and save them, as the condition of the covenant performed, under which notion it is that faith justifieth.

2. Yet other improper or subordinate reasons (which receive their life from the former, and without it would be no reasons) may be given: as, 1. from the equity; and, 2. from the suitableness and conveniency.

1. It is but equal that he who hath bought us, and that so dearly, and from a state so deplorable and desperate as we were in, should be acknowledged and accepted for our Savior and our Lord; and that we, who are not our own, "but are bought with a price, should glorify him with our bodies and souls, which are

his;" (1 Cor. vi. 20. and vii. 23.) especially when, for that end, he both died and rose again, that he might rule, or be Lord over, both quick and dead; Rom. iv. 9. If one of you should buy a man from the galleys or gallows, with the price of your whole estate, or the life of your only son, would you not expect that he should be at your disposal? That he should love you, depend on you, and be subject to you?

2. And as salvation by free grace through Christ is a way most suitable to God's honor, and to our own necessitous and low condition, so, in subordination thereto, the way of believing is most rationally conducive to the same ends. As we could not have had a fitter way to the Father than by Christ, so neither could there be a more fit way to Christ, or means to partake of him, than by faith; for though I cannot call it the instrumental cause of our justification, either active or passive, yet is this faith or acceptance of Christ for our Savior and King, which is here called "kissing the Son," the fairest condition that we could reasonably expect, and the most apparently tending to the honor of our Redeemer; applying and appropriating to ourselves the person, righteousness, and benefits procured and offered, but not the least of the honor of the work. All we do is but to accept what Christ hath procured, and that must be by the special assistance of his Spirit too.

4. The fourth thing I promised is to show you why no other privilege or power in the world can save him that doth not kiss the Son. It may here suffice that I have showed you God's determination to the contrary. But further consider, (if any should hope to escape by their dignities, titles, friends, strength, or any other endowments or virtuous qualifications,) 1. What is their task. 2. What is their power to perform it.

1. They must resist the irresistible will of God. They must do that which heaven or earth, men or devils, were never able yet to do. They have resisted his laws and his love, but they could never resist his purpose or his power. The power that undertaketh to save an enemy or neglecter of Christ, must first overcome the power of the Almighty, and conquer him that doth command the world. And who hath the strength that is sufficient for this? Sinner, before thou venture thy soul upon such a mad conceit, or think to be saved whether God will or not, try first thy skill and strength in some inferior attempt: bid the sun or moon stand still in the firmament; invert the several seasons of the year; bid the snow and frost to come in summer, and the flowers and fruits to spring in winter; command the streams to turn their course, or the tide its times, or the winds their motion. If these will obey thee, and thy word can prevail with them against the law of their Creator, then mayest thou proceed with the greater

confidence and courage, and have some hope to save the neglecters of Christ. Or, try first whether thou canst save thy present life against the course of nature and will of God: call back thine age and years that are past; command thy pains and sickness to be gone; chide back this bold approaching death. Will they not obey thee? Canst thou do none of these? How then canst thou expect the saving of thy soul against the determinate will and way of God? Where dwelleth that man, or what was his name, that did neglect Christ, and yet escape damnation? Who hath hardened himself against him and hath prospered? Job ix. 4. And dost thou think, then, to be first? Thou mayest, perhaps, knock boldly at the gate of heaven, and plead thy greatness, thy virtues, thy alms-deeds, and formal devotion; but thou shalt receive a more woful answer than thou dost expect. Jesus we know, and obedient faith in him we know, but who are ye?

2. He that will save the soul, that loveth not, dependeth not on, and subjecteth not himself to Christ, must first make false the word of God, and make the true and faithful God a liar. This is another part of his task: God hath given it under his hand for truth, that "he that believeth not is condemned already;" (John iii. 18.) that "he shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him;" (John iii. 36.) that they who are invited to Christ, and make light of it, or make excuses, "shall never taste of his supper;" (Luke xiv. 24. Matt. xxii. 5. 8.) that "it shall be easier for Sodom in the day of judgment, than for that city which refuseth the offers of the gospel;" (Matt. x. 15.) that whosoever would not have Christ to reign over them "shall be brought forth at last and destroyed before him as his enemies;" (Luke xix. 27.) that "they shall all be damned that believe not the truth, but have pleasure in unrighteousness;" 2 Thess. ii. 12, &c. And hath the Almighty said that thus it shall be? Who, then, is he that dare say it shall not be? Is this the concluded decree of Heaven? What power or policy is able to reverse it? Hath God said it, and will he not do it?

Thus you see his task that will undertake to save one neglecter of Christ.

2. Let us now consider what power that is which must perform it. If it be done, it must be either, 1. By wisdom; or, 2. By strength; whereas, the chiefest of men, even the kings and judges of the earth, are both ignorant and impotent.

1. Ignorant. Though judges are learned in the repute of the world, alas! poor crawling, breathing dust! do you know the secrets of your Maker's counsel? And are you able to overreach them, and frustrate his designs? Doth this book know what is

written in it? Can the seat you sit on overtop your counsels? More likely than for you to overtop the Lord. Silly worms! you know not what God is, nor know you any one of his revealed thoughts, no more than that pillar doth know your thoughts. You know not what you are yourselves, nor see any further than the superficies of your skin. What is thy soul; and whence didst thou receive it? Dost thou know its form; or didst thou feel it enter? Which part didst thou feel it first possess? Thou canst call it a spirit, but knowest thou what a spirit is; or rather only what it is not? Thou knowest not that whereby thou knowest; and how was thy body formed in the womb? What was it an hundred years ago? What is that vital heat and moisture? What causeth that order and diversity of its parts? When will the most expert anatomists and physicians be agreed? Why, there are mysteries in the smallest worm, which thou canst not reach; nor couldst thou resolve the doubts arising about an ant or atom, much less about the sun, or fire, or air, or wind, &c.; and canst thou not know thyself, nor the smallest part of thyself, nor the smallest creature; and yet canst thou overreach the everlasting counsels?

2. And is thy might and power any greater than thy policy? Why, what are the kings and rulers of the earth but lumps of clay, that can speak and go; moving shadows, the flowers of a day, a corruptible seed, blown up to that swelled consistence in which it appears, as children blow their bubbles of soap, somewhat invisible condensate; which, that it may become visible, is become more gross, and so more vile, and will shortly be almost all turned into invisible again; and that little dust which corruption leaves by the force of fire, may be dissipated yet more; and then where is this specious part of the man? Surely now that body, which is so much esteemed, is but a loathsome lump of corruptible flesh, covered with a smooth skin, and kept a little while from stinking by the presence of the soul, and must shortly be cast out of sight into a grave, as unfit for the sight or smell of the living, and there be consumed with rottenness and worms. These are the kings and rulers of the earth; this is the power that must conquer heaven, and save them that rebel against Christ the Lord. They that cannot live a month without repairing their consuming bodies by food, one part whereof doth turn to their vital blood and spirits, and the other to loathsome insufferable excrements, so near is the kin between their best and worst, judge all you that have common reason, whether he that cannot keep himself alive an hour, and shortly will not be able to stir a finger, to remove the worms that feed upon his heart, be able to resist the strength of Christ, and

save the soul, that God hath said and sworn shall not be saved. Alas! poor souls, that have no better saviors. And well may Christ, his truth, and cause, prevail that have no stronger enemies.

Use 1. You have here a text that will fully inform you how you are like to speed at the bar of Christ; who shall die and who shall live. The great assize is near at hand; the feet of our Judge are even at the door. Go thy way, unbelieving sinner, when thou hast had all the pleasure that sin will afford thee; lie down in the dust and sleep awhile, the rousing voice shall quickly awake thee, and thine eyes shall see that dreadful day. O blessed day! O doleful day! Blessed to the saints, doleful to the wicked. O the rejoicing! O the lamenting that there will be! The triumphant shoutings of joyful saints; the hideous, roaring cries of the ungodly, when each man hath newly received his doom, and there is nothing but eternal glory and eternal fire. Beloved hearers, every man of you shall shortly there appear, and wait as the trembling prisoner at the bar, to hear what doom must pass upon you. Do you not believe this? I hope you do believe it. Why, what would you give now to know, for certain, how it shall go with you? Why, here is the book by which you must be judged, and here is the sum of it in my text, and the grounds upon which the Judge will then proceed. Will you but go along with me, and answer the questions which hence I shall put to you, and search and judge yourselves by them as you go, you may know what doom you may then expect; only deal faithfully, and search thoroughly, for self-flattery will not prevent your sorrow.

And here you must know that it is the kiss of the heart, and not of the lips, which we must here inquire after. The question will not be at the great day, who hath spoken Christ fair; or who hath called themselves by the name of Christians; or who hath said the Creed or the Lord's Prayer oftenest; or cried, Lord, Lord; or come to church; or carried a Bible; or who hath held this opinion, or who that. It would make a man's heart ache to think how zealously men will honor the shadow of Christ, and bow at his name, and reverence the image of the cross which he died on, and the names and relics of the saints that died for him, and yet do utterly neglect the Lord himself, and cannot endure to be governed by him, and resist his Spirit, and scorn his strict and holy ways, and despitefully hate them that most love and obey him, and yet believe themselves to be real Christians. For God's sake, sirs, do not so delude your immortal souls, as to think your baptism, and your outward devotion, and your good meanings, as you call them, and your righteous dealing with men, will serve the turn to prove you Christians. Alas! this is but, with Judas, to kiss the mouth of Christ, and indeed to fetch your death from those blessed

lips, from whence the saints do fetch their life. I will show you some surer signs than these.

1. And, first, let me a little inquire into your subjection to Christ. Do you remember the time when you were the servants of sin, and when Satan led you captive at his will, and the prince of darkness ruled in your souls, and all within you was in a carnal peace? Do you remember when the Spirit in the word came powerfully upon your hearts, and bound Satan, and cast him out, and answered all your reasonings, and conquered all your carnal wisdom, and brought you from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God? Acts xxvi. 18. Or, at least, are you sure that now you live not under the same lord and laws as the ungodly do? Hath Christ now the only sovereignty in your souls? Is his word thy law, which thou darest not pass? Doth it bind thy thoughts, and rule thy tongue, and command thyself, and all thou hast? Hast thou laid all down at the feet of Christ, and resigned thyself and all to his will, and devoted all to his disposal and service? If custom bid thee curse and swear, and Christ forbid thee, which dost thou obey? If thy appetite bid thee take thy cups, or fare deliciously every day; if thy company bid thee play the good fellow, or scorn the godly; if thy covetousness bid thee love the world, and Christ forbid thee, which dost thou obey? If Christ bid thee be holy, and walk precisely, and be violent for heaven, and strive to enter in, and the world and the flesh be enemies to all this, and cry it down as tedious folly, which dost thou obey? Dost thou daily and spiritually worship him in private, and in thy family, and teach thy children and servants to fear the Lord? I entreat you, sirs, deal truly in answering these questions: never man was saved by the bare title of a Christian. If you are not subject to Christ, you are not Christians, no more than a picture or a carcass is a man; and your salvation will be such as your Christianity is. Subjection is an essential part of thy faith, and obedience is its fruit. In short, then, dost thou make him thy fear, and tremble at his word? Dare thou run upon fire or water, sword or cannon, rather than willfully run upon his displeasure? Wouldest thou rather displease thy dearest friend, the greatest prince, or thine own flesh, than wittingly provoke him? When Christ speaks against thy sweetest sin, thy nature, or custom, or credit, or life, against thy rooted opinions, or thy corrupt traditions, art thou willing to submit to all that he revealeth? Dost thou say, "Speak, Lord, for thy servant heareth? Lord, what wouldest thou have me to do? I am ready to do thy will, O God."

Beloved hearers, this is the frame of every servant of Christ, and this is the acknowledging and accepting him for your Lord.

I beseech you cozen not your souls with shows and formalities. If ever you be saved without this subjection, it must be without Christ's merits or mercy. It must be in a way that Scripture revealeth not; nay, it must be in despite of God; his truth must be falsified, and his power must be mastered, before the disobedient can be saved from his wrath.

2. Examine, also, your dependence on Christ, whether you kiss his hand as well as his feet. Do you understand that you are all by nature condemned men, and liable to the everlasting wrath of God; that Christ hath interposed and paid this debt, and bought us as his own by the satisfaction of that justice; that all things are now delivered into his hands, (John xiii. 3.) and he is made head over all things to his church? Eph. i. 21, 22. Dost thou take him for thy only Savior, and believe the history of his life and passion, the truth of his divine and human nature, his resurrection, his office, and his approaching judgment? Dost thou see that all thy supposed righteousness is but vanity and sin, and that thyself art unable to make the least satisfaction to the law by thy works or sufferings, and if his blood do not wash thee, and his righteousness justify thee, thou must certainly be damned yet, and perish forever? Dost thou, therefore, cast thyself into his arms, and venture thy everlasting state upon him, and trust him with thy soul, and fetch all thy help and healing from him? When sin is remembered, and thy conscience troubled, and the forethoughts of judgment do amaze thy soul, dost thou then fetch thy comfort from the views of his blood, and the thoughts of the freeness and fullness of his satisfaction, his love, and gospel offers and promises? Dost thou so build upon his promise of a happiness hereafter, that thou canst let go all thy happiness here, and drink of his cup, and be baptized with his baptism, and lose thy life upon his promise that thou shalt save it? Canst thou part with goods and friends, and all that thou hast, in hope of a promised glory which thou never sawest? If thou canst thus drink with him of the brook in the way, thou shalt also with him lift up the head; Psalm cx. 7. Dost thou perceive a Mediator as well as a God in all thy mercies, both special and common, and taste his blood in all that thou receivest, and wait upon his hand for thy future supplies? Why, this is kissing the hand of Christ, and depending upon him. O, how contrary is the case of the world, whose confidence is like the Samaritan's worship: they trust God, and their wits, and labors, Christ and their supposed merits; I would I might not say Christ and deceit, and wicked contrivances. O blasphemous! joining of heaven and hell to make up one foundation of their trust!

3. Examine a little also your love to Christ. Do you thus kiss the Son? Do your souls cleave to him, and embrace him with

the strongest of your affections? Sirs, though there is nothing that the blind world is more confident in than this, that they love Christ with all their hearts, yet is there nothing wherein they are more false and faulty. I beseech you, therefore, deal truly in answering here. Are your hearts set upon the Lord Jesus? Do you love him above all things in this world? Do you stick at your answer? Do you not know? Sure, then, at best you love him but little, or else you could not choose but know it. Love is a stirring and sensible affection: you know what it is to love a friend. Feel by this pulse whether you live or die. Doth it beat more strongly toward Christ than to any thing else? Never question man the necessity of this; he hath concluded, 'If thou love any thing more than him, thou art not worthy of him, nor canst be his disciple.' Are thy thoughts of Christ thy freest and thy sweetest thoughts? Are thy speeches of him thy sweetest speeches? When thou awakest, art thou still with him; and is he next thy heart? When thou walkest abroad, dost thou take him in thy thoughts? Canst thou say, and lie not, that thou wast ever deeply in love with him, that thou dost love him but as heartily as thou dost thy friend, and art as loath to displease him, and as glad of his presence, and as much troubled at his strangeness or absence? Hath thy minister or godly acquaintance ever heard thee bemoaning thy soul for want of Christ, or inquiring what thou shouldest do to attain him? or thy family heard thee commending his excellency, and laboring to kindle their affections towards him? Why, love will not be hid: when it hath its desire, it will be rejoicing, and when it wants it, it will be complaining. Or, at least, can thy conscience witness thy longings, thy groans, thy prayers for a Christ? Wilt thou stand to the testimony of these witnesses? Do you love his weak, his poor, despised members? Do you visit them, clothe them, feed them to your power? Not only in a common natural compassion to them as they are your neighbors, but do you love or relieve a prophet in the name of a prophet, or a disciple in the name of a disciple? Matt. x. 40. 42. Shall all these decide the question?

Beloved hearers, I profess to you all, in the name of our Lord, that it is not your bold and confident affirming that you love Christ, which will serve your turn when Christ shall judge: he will search deep, and judge according to the truth in the inward parts. How many thousands will then perish as his utter enemies, that verily thought themselves his friends! How easily now might they find their mistake if they would but be at the pains to examine themselves! O try, try, sirs, before God try you; judge yourselves before Christ judge you. It would grieve a man's heart that knows what it is to love Christ, to believe, to be

subject to him, to see how rare these are in the world, and yet how confident and careless most men are. It may be that you may think much that I so question your love; yet Christ, that knew all things, questioned Peter's love to him, and that three times, till it grieved Peter. I am a stranger to the most of you, and therefore know not your conditions or inclinations. Yet judge me not censorious if I fear the worst, and if I measure you by the rest of the world; and then I may confidently and sadly conclude that Christ hath few loving subjects among you. If we could hear your oaths and vain speeches turned to heavenly, soul-edifying discourse, and your covetousness to conscionableness, and see that the word of Christ were your law, and that you laid out your endeavors for heaven in good earnest, then we should say, 'These people are the loving subjects of Christ.' But when men are enemies to Christ's doctrine, and ways, and worship, and had rather live after the flesh, and the world, and the traditions of their fathers, and are notorious for profaneness, superstition, and enmity to reformation, who can choose but condole your case? And if your obstinacy will not endure us to help you, yet you shall give us leave, whether you will or no, to lament you.

Use 2. But it is time that I turn my speech to exhortation; and O that you would encourage me with your resolutions to obey! My business here to-day is as his herald and ambassador, to proclaim the Lord Jesus your King and Savior, and to know whether you will heartily acknowledge and take him so to be or not. And to persuade you to take so fair an offer while you may have it, and to kiss the Son lest his wrath be kindled. This is my business here, in which if I had not some hope to speed, the Lord knows I would not have been here to-day. You will say, 'This is a common errand; do you think we never heard of Christ before?' I confess it is common, blessed be God for it, (and long may it so continue and increase, and let it be as constant and durable to us as the sun in the firmament; and the Lord grant that England's sins or enemies may never bereave them of the blessing of the gospel, and then it will be a happier land than yet ever was any on the face of the earth;) but is it as common to receive Christ in love and obedience? I would it were. I know the name of Christ is common. The swearer doth swear by it, the beggar begs by it, the charmer puts it into his charms, and the jester into his jests, and every Papist and ignorant Protestant doth mutter it oftentimes over in his prayers. But who trembleth at it? or triumpheth in it? Who maketh it his fear and his joy? And give up their souls and lives to be governed by Christ? I do here solemnly proclaim to you that the Lord Jesus will not be put off with your compliments: he cares not for your mere name of Christianity,

nor your cap, nor your knee. If thy heart be not set upon him, thou art none of his. His word must be your law, and you must depend on him alone for soul and body, or never look for mercy at his hands. He is the Author of eternal salvation to them only that obey him; Heb. v. 9.

What say you, then, sirs, in answer to my message? And what course do you resolve upon? Shall Christ be your love, and your Lord, or not? Will you kiss the Son, or will you slight him still? Methinks you should easily be resolved, and say, 'Away with pleasure, and credit, and worldly gain; away with these bewitching delights and companions; Christ hath bought my heart, and he shall have it; he is my Lord, and I will be ruled by him.' Hearers, I hope God hath kept you alive till now to show you mercy, and brought some sinners hither to-day to prevail with their hearts; and my hope is somewhat strengthened by God's disposal of my own spirit. I was strongly tempted to have preached this sermon in the enticing words of human wisdom, tending to a proud ostentation of parts; but Christ hath assisted me to conquer the temptation, and commanded me to preach him in plainness, and evidence of the Spirit. I come not to persuade you to opinions or factions, to be for this side or for that, but to be with all your hearts for Christ, as ever you look that Christ should be for you; to love him as he that hath bought you from eternal wrath, and died to save you from everlasting burnings; to lay hold on him with most earnest, affectionate apprehension, as a man that is ready to drown would do upon a bough, or upon the hand of his friend that would pull him to the shore; to wait for the law of thy direction from him, and do nothing till thou hast asked counsel at his word, and know his mind, whether thou shouldest do it or no, till thou feel thy conscience bound by his law, that thou canst not stir till he give thee leave; that the commands of parents and princes may stoop to his, much more the commands of custom and company, of credit or pleasure, of the world or flesh: these are the things that I exhort you to; and I must tell you that Christ doth flatly expect them at your hands.

I will here back these exhortations with some persuading considerations. Think of what I say, and weigh it as we go. If I speak not truth and reason, then reject it with disdain, and spare not; but if it be, and thy conscience tell thee so, take heed then how thou dost neglect or reject it, lest thou be found a fighter against the Spirit, and lest the curse of God do seize upon that heart that would not yield to truth and reason.

And I will draw these considerations only from my text:

1. Thou art else a rebel against thy sovereign Lord. This I gather from the command in my text; and, indeed, the scope of

the whole psalm. God hath given thee into the hands of his Son, and made him Lord and King of all, and commanded all men to accept him, and submit unto him. Who can show such title to the sovereignty? such right to rule thee as Christ can do? He is thy Maker, and so is not Satan; he dearly bought thee, and so did not the world; "Thou wast not redeemed with silver, and gold, and corruptible things;" 1 Peter i. 18. I make this challenge here in the behalf of Christ; let any thing in the world step forth and show a better title to thee, to thy heart, and to thy life, than Christ doth show, and let them take thy heart, and take the rule. But why do I speak thus? I know thou wilt confess it; and yet wilt thou not yield him thy chiefest love and obedience. Out of thy own mouth then art thou condemned, and thou proclaimest thyself a knowing and willful rebel.

2. To deny thy affections and subjection to Christ is the most barbarous unkindness that a sinner can be guilty of. Did he pity thee in thy lost estate, and take thee up when thou layest wounded in the way, and make thee a plaster of the blood of his heart? And is this thy requital? Did he come down from heaven to earth, to seek thee when thou wast lost, and take upon him all thy debt, and put himself into the prison of the world and flesh? Hath he paid for thy folly, and borne that wrath of God which thou must have suffered forever? And doth he not now deserve to be entertained with most affectionate respect? But with a few cold thoughts instead of hearty love; and with a few formal words instead of worship? What hurt had it been to him if thou hadst perished? What would he have lost by it if thou hadst lain in hell? Would not justice have been glorified upon a disobedient wretch? Might not he have said to his Father, 'What are these worms and sinners to me? must I smart for their folly? must I suffer when they have sinned? must I debase myself to become man because they would have exalted themselves to become as God? If they will needs undo themselves, what is it to me? If they will cast themselves into the flames of hell, must I go thither to fetch them out?' Thus Christ might have put off the suffering and the shame, and let it fall and lie where it was due; but he did not; his compassion would not suffer him to see us suffer; justice must be satisfied, the threat must be fulfilled; Christ seeth that we cannot overcome it, but he can; therefore, he comes down into flesh; he lives on earth; he fasteth; he weepeth; he is weary; he is tempted; he hath not a place to put his head; he is hated; he is spit upon; he is clothed as a fool, and made a scorn; he sweateth blood; he is crucified with thieves; he bears the burden that would have sunk all us to hell; and must he, after all this, be neglected and forgotten, and his laws that should rule us be laid aside, and be

accounted too strict and precise for us to live by? O let the heavens blush, and the earth be ashamed, at this barbarous ingratitude! How can such a people show their faces at his coming, or look him in the face when he shall judge them for this! Would you use a friend thus? No, nor an enemy. Methinks you should rather wonder with yourselves that ever Christ should give you leave to love him, and say, Will the Lord endure such a wretch to kiss him? Will he suffer himself to be embraced by those arms which have been defiled so oft by the embracements of sin? Will he so highly honor me as to be his subject and his servant, and to be guided by such a blessed and perfect law? And doth he require no harder conditions than these for my salvation? Take, then, my heart, Lord, it is thine; and O that it were better worth thy having; or take it and make it better: the spear hath opened me a passage to thy heart; let the Spirit open thee a passage into mine; deservedly may those gates be fuel for hell, that would not open to let in the King of Glory.

3. To deny thy affection and subjection to the Son is the greatest folly and madness in the world. Why doth he require this so earnestly at thy hands? Is it for thy hurt, or for thy good? Would he make a prey of thee for his own advantage? Is it not any need that he hath of thee or of thy service, or because thou hast need of him for thy direction and salvation? Would he steal away thy heart, as the world doth, to delude it? Would he draw thee, as Satan doth, to serve him that he may torment thee? If so, it were no wonder that thou art so hardly drawn to him; but thou knowest, sure, that Christ hath none of these ends.

The truth is this: His dying on the cross is but part of the work that is necessary to thy salvation: this was but the paying of the debt: he must give thee, moreover, a peculiar interest, and make that to be absolutely thine, which was thine but conditionally: he must take off thy rags, and wash thy sores, and qualify thy soul for thy prepared glory, and bring thee out of the prison of sin and death, and present thee to his Father blameless and undefiled, and estate thee in greater dignity than thou fell from: and all this must he do by drawing thee to himself, and laying himself upon thee as the prophet upon the child, and closing thy heart with his heart, and thy will with his will, and thy thoughts and ways with the rule of his word; and is this against thee or for thee? Is there any hurt to thee in all this? I dare challenge earth and hell, and all the enemies of Christ in both, to show the least hurt that ever he caused to the soul of a believer, or the least wrong to the soul of any.

And must he then have such a stir to do thee good? Must he, so beseech thee to be happy, and follow thee with entreaties? And

yet art thou like a stock, that neither hears nor feels? Nay, dost thou not murmur and strive against him, as if he were about to do thee a mischief, and would rather cut thy throat than cure thee, and were going to destroy thee, and not to save thee? I appeal to any that hath not renounced his reason, whether this be not notorious, brutish unreasonableness; and whether thou be not like a beast, that must be cast or held while you dress his sores, than to a man that should help on his own recovery. Foolish sinner! It is thy sin that hurts thee, and not thy Savior: why dost thou not rather strive against that? It is the devil that would destroy thee; and thou dost not grudge at thy obedience to him. Be judge thyself whether this be wise or equal dealing.

Sinner, I beseech thee, in the behalf of thy poor soul, if thou have such a mind to renounce thy Savior, do it not till thou hast found a better master: say as Peter, "Whither shall we go, Lord? thou hast the words of eternal life:" and when thou knowest once where to be better, then go thy way; part with Christ, and spare not. If thy merry company, or thy honor, or thy wealth, or all the friends and delights in the world, will do that for thee which Christ hath done, and which, at last, he will do, if thou stick to him, then take them for thy gods, and let Christ go. In the mean time, let me prevail with thee, as thou art a man of reason, sell not thy Savior till thou know for what; sell not thy soul till thou know why; sell not thy hopes of heaven for nothing. God forbid that thy willful folly should bring thee to hell, and there thou shouldst lie roaring and crying out forever, 'This is the reward of my neglecting Christ; he would have led me to glory, and I would not follow him; I sold heaven for a few merry hours, for a little honor, and ease, and delight, to my flesh: here I lie in torment, because I would not be ruled by Christ, but chose my lusts and pleasures before him.' Sinner, do not think I speak harshly or uncharitably to call this neglect of Christ thy folly; as true as thou livest and hearest me this day, except thy timely submission do prevent it, which God grant it may, thou wilt, one of these days, befool thyself a thousand times more than I now befool thee, and call thyself mad, and a thousand times mad, when thou thinkest how fair thou wast for heaven, and how ready Christ was to have been thy Savior and thy Lord, and how light thou madest of his offers: either this will prove true, to thy cost, or else am I a false prophet, and a cursed deceiver. Be wise, therefore, be learned, and kiss the Son.

The former considerations were drawn from the aggravations of the sin: the following are drawn from the aggravations of the punishment, and from the words of the text too:—

I. God will be angry if you kiss not the Son. His wrath is as

fire, and this neglect of Christ is the way to kindle it. If thou art not a believer, thou art condemned already; but this will bring upon thee double condemnation. Believe it for a truth, all thy sins, as they are against the covenant of works, even the most heinous of them, are not so provoking and destroying as thy slighting of Christ. O, what will the Father say to such an unworthy wretch! 'Must I send my Son from my bosom to suffer for thee? Must he groan when thou shouldest groan, and bleed when thou shouldest bleed, and die when thou shouldest die? And canst thou not now be persuaded to embrace him, and obey him? Must the world be courted whilst he stands by? Must he have the naked title of thy Lord and Savior, while thy fleshly pleasures and profits have thy heart? What wrath can be too great, what hell too hot, for such an ungrateful, unworthy wretch! Must I prepare thee a portion of the blood of my Son, and wilt thou not be persuaded now to drink it? Must I be at so much cost to save thee, and wilt thou not obey that thou mayest be saved? Go seize upon him, justice; let my wrath consume thee; let hell devour thee; let thy own conscience forever torment thee; seeing thou hast chosen death, thou shalt have it; and, as thou hast rejected heaven, thou shalt never see it, "but my wrath shall abide upon thee forever;" John iii. 36. Woe to thee, sinner, if this be once thy sentence! Thou wert better have all the world angry with thee, and bound in an oath against thee, as the Jews against Paul, than that one drop of his anger should light upon thee; thou wert better have heaven and earth to fall upon thee, than one degree of God's displeasure.

2. As this wrath is of fire, so it is a consuming fire, and causeth the sinner utterly to perish. All this is plain in the text; not that the being of the soul will cease; such a perishing the sinner would be glad of; a happy man would he think himself, if he might die as the brutes, and be no more: but such wishes are vain. It is but a glimpse of his own condition, which he shall see in the great combustion of the world: when he seeth the heaven and earth on fire, he seeth but the picture of his approaching woe; but, alas! it is he that must feel the devouring fire. The world will be but refined or consumed by its fire; but there must he burn, and burn forever, and yet be neither consumed nor refined. The earth will not feel the flames that burn it, but his soul and body must feel it with a witness: little know his friends, that are honorably interring his corpse, what his miserable soul is seeing and feeling: here endeth the story of his prosperity and delights, and now begins the tragedy that will never end: oh! how his merry days are vanished as a dream, and his jovial life as a tale that is told; his witty jests, his pleasant sports, his cards and

dice, his merry company and wanton dalliance, his cups and queans, yea, his hopes of heaven and confident conceits of escaping this wrath, are all perished with him in the way : as the wax melteth before the fire, as the chaff is scattered before the wind, as the stubble consumeth before the flames, as the flowers do wither before the scorching sun ; so are all his sinful pleasures withered, consumed, scattered and melted. And is not the hearty embracing of Christ, and subjection to him, a cheap prevention of all this ? O ! who among you can dwell with the devouring fire ? “ Who can dwell with the everlasting burnings ? ” Isaiah xxxiii. 14. This God hath said he will surely do : if you are able to gainsay and resist him, try your strength ; read his challenge—“ Who would set the briers and thorns against me in battle ? I would go through them, I would burn them together ; ” Isaiah xxvii. 4.

3. This perishing will be sudden and unexpected, in the way of their sin and resistance of Christ, in the way of their fleshly delights and hopes ; “ They shall perish in the way ; ” 1 Thes. v. 3. Matt. xxiv. 30. As fire doth terribly break out in the night, when men are sleeping, and consumeth the fruit of their long labors, so will this fire break forth upon their souls ; and how near may it be when you little think on it ! A hundred to one but some of us present shall within a few months be in another world ; and what world it will be you may easily conceive if you do not embrace and obey the Son. How many have been smitten, with Herod, in the midst of their vain glory ! How many, like Ahab, have been wounded in fight, and dinged the earth with their flesh and blood, who left the Lord’s people to be fed with bread and water of affliction, in confidence of their own return to peace ! How many have been swallowed up, like Pharaoh and his host, in their rash and malicious pursuit of the godly ! Little thinks many an ignorant, careless soul, what a change of his condition he shall shortly find. Those thousands of souls that are now in misery did as little think of that doleful state while they were merrily pleasing the flesh on earth, and forgetting Christ and their eternal state, as you do now ; they could as contemptuously jeer the preacher as you, and verily believed that all this talk was but words, and wind, and empty threats, and ventured their souls as boldly upon their carnal hopes. Little thought Sodom of the devouring fire when they were furiously assaulting the door of their righteous reprover. As little do the raging enemies of godliness among us think of the deplorable state which they are hastening to. They will cry out themselves then, ‘ Little did I think to see this day, or feel these torments ! ’ Why, thou wouldest not think of it, or else thou mightest ; God told thee in Scripture, and ministers in their preaching, but thou wouldest not believe till it was too late.

4. A little of God's wrath will bring down all this upon those that embrace not and obey not the Son. If his wrath be kindled, yea, but a little, &c. As his mercy being the mercy of an infinite God, a little of it will sweeten a world of crosses; so therefore will a little of his wrath consume a world of pleasures; one spark fell among the Bethshemites, and consumed fifty thousand and seventy men, but for looking into the ark, till the people cry out, "Who can stand before this holy Lord God?" 1 Sam. vi. 19, 20. How, then, will the neglecters of Christ stand before him! Sirs, methinks we should not hear of this as strangers or unbelievers. There did but one spark fall upon England, and what a combustion hath it cast this kingdom into! How many houses and towns hath it consumed! How many thousands of people hath it impoverished! How many children hath it left fatherless! And how many thousand bodies hath it bereaved of their souls! And though there are as many hearty prayers and tears poured forth to quench it as most kingdoms on earth have had, yet is the fire kindled afresh, and threateneth a more terrible desolation than before, as if it would turn us all to ashes. One spark fell upon Germany, another upon Ireland; and what it hath done there I need not tell you. If a little of this wrath do but seize upon thy body, what cries, and groans, and lamentations doth it raise! If it be on one member, yea, but a tooth, how dost thou roar with intolerable pain, and wouldest not take the world to live forever in that condition! If it seize upon the conscience, what torments doth it cause, as if the man were already in hell! He thinketh every thing he seeth is against him; he feareth every bit he eateth should be his bane. If he sleep, he dreams of death and judgment; when he awaketh, his conscience and horror awake with him: he is weary of living, and fearful of dying: even the thoughts of heaven are terrible to him, because he thinks it is not for him. O! what a pitiful sight it is to see a man under the wrath of God! And are these little sparks so intolerable hot? What, then, do you think are the everlasting flames? Beloved hearers, if God had not spoke this, I durst not have spoke it: the desire of my soul is, that you may never feel it, or else I should never have chosen so unpleasing a subject, but that I hope the foreknowing may help you to prevent it; but let me tell you from God, that, as sure as the heaven is over your head, and the earth under your feet, except the Son of God be nearer thy heart, and dearer to thy heart than friends, or goods, or pleasures, or life, or any thing in this world, this burning wrath will never be prevented; Matt. x. 27. Luke xiv. 46.

5. When this wrath of God is thoroughly kindled, the world will discern the blessed from the wretched. "Then blessed are they that trust in him." It is the property of the wicked to be

wise too late. Those that now they esteem but precise fools, will then be acknowledged blessed men. Bear with their scorn, Christians, in the meantime; they will very shortly wish themselves in your stead, and would give all that ever they were masters of, that they had sought and loved Christ as earnestly as you, and had a little of your oil when they find their lamps are out; Matt. xxv. 8.

And now, hearers, what is your resolution? Perhaps you have been enemies to Christ, under the name of Christians: will you still be so? Have you not loathed this busy, diligent serving of him, and hated them that most carefully seek him, more than the vilest drunkard or blasphemer? Have not his word, and service, and Sabbaths, been a burden to you? Have not multitudes ventured their lives against his ordinances and government? Nay, is it not almost the common voice of the nation in effect—‘Give us our sports, and liberty of sinning; give us our readers, and singing men, and drunken preachers; give us our holydays and ceremonies, and the customs of our forefathers: away with these precise fellows; they are an eye-sore to us: these precise preachers shall not control us; this precise Scripture shall be no law to us;’ and, consequently, this Christ shall not rule over us?

How long hath England rebelled against his government! Mr. Udall told them, in the days of Queen Elizabeth, ‘that if they would not set up the discipline of Christ in the church, Christ would set it up himself in a way that would make their hearts to ache.’ I think their hearts have ached by this time; and as they judged him to the gallows for his prediction, so hath Christ executed them by thousands for their rebellion against him; and yet they are as unwilling of his government as ever. The kings of the earth are afraid lest Christ’s government should unking them; the rulers are jealous lest it will depose them from their dignities; even the reformers that have ventured all to set it up, are jealous lest it will encroach upon their power and privileges; kings are afraid of it, and think themselves but half kings, where Christ doth set up his word and discipline; parliaments are afraid of it, lest it should usurp their authority; lawyers are afraid of it, lest it should take away their gains, and the laws of Christ should overtop the laws of the land; the people are afraid of it, lest it will compel them to subjection to that law and way which their souls abhor: indeed, if men may be their own judges, then Christ hath no enemies in England at all; we are his friends, and all good Christians. It is precisians and rebels that men hate, and not Christ: it is not the government of Christ that we are afraid of, but the domineering of aspiring, ambitious presbyters, (viz. that generation of godly, learned, humble ministers, who have done

more than ever did any before them to make themselves incapable of preferment or domineering;) and when men disobey and disregard our doctrine, it is not Christ, but the preacher, that they despise and disobey. And if the Jews might so have been their own judges, it was not the Son of God whom they crucified, but an enemy to Cæsar, and a blasphemer that works by the devil. It was not Paul, a saint, that they persecuted, but one that they found to be a pestilent fellow, and a mover of sedition amongst the people. But were there no seditious persons but apostles and Christians; nor no troublers of Israel but Elias; nor no enemies to Cæsar but Christ and his friends? O! God will shortly take off the veil of hypocrisy from the actions of the world, and make them confess that it was Christ they resisted, and that it was his holy ways and word that did kindle their fury; else would they as soon have fallen upon the ungodly rabble, as they did upon the most zealous and conscionable Christians; and, however you mangle and deform them with your false accusations and reproach, he will then know and own his people and his cause, and will say to the world, 'In despising them you despised me; and, inasmuch as you did it to one of these little ones, you did it unto me.' As Dr. Stoughton saith, 'If you strike a schismatic, and God find a saint lie a-bleeding, and you to answer it, I would not be in your coat for more than you got by it.' Hath the world ever gained by resisting Christ? Doth it make the crown sit faster on the heads of kings? Or, must they not rather do to Christ as King John to his supposed vicar, resign their crowns to him, and take them from him again as his tributaries, before they can hold them by a certain tenure? Read over but this psalm, and judge: "Herod must kill the child Jesus to secure his crown: the Jews must kill him lest the Romans should come and take away their place and nation;" John xi. 48. And did this means secure them; or did it bring upon them the destruction which they thought to avoid?

Or have the people been greater gainers by this than by their kings? What hath England got by resisting his gospel and government, by hating his servants, and by scorning his holy ways? What have you got by it in this city? What say you? Have you yet done with your enmity and resistance? Have you enough; or would you yet have more? If you have not done with Christ, he hath not done with you; you may try again, and follow on as far as Pharaoh if you will, but if you be not losers in the latter end, I have lost my judgment; and if you return in peace, God hath not spoken by me; 1 Kings xxii. 28.

Sirs, I am loath to leave you till the bargain be made. What say you? Do you heartily consent that Christ shall be your Sovereign, his word your law, his people your companions, his

worship your recreation, his merits your refuge, his glory your end, and himself the desire and delight of your souls? The Lord Jesus Christ now waiteth upon you for your resolution and answer; thou wilt very shortly wait upon him for thy doom: as ever thou wouldst then have him speak life to thy soul, do thou now resolve upon the way of life. Remember thou art almost at death and judgment. What wouldest thou resolve if thou knewest that it were to-morrow? If thou didst but see what others do now suffer for neglecting him, that doth now offer thee his grace, what wouldest thou then resolve to do? Sirs, it stirreth my heart to look upon you, (as Xerxes upon his army,) and to think that it is not an hundred years till every soul of you shall be in heaven or in hell; and it may be not an hundred hours till some of your souls must take their leave of your bodies: when it comes to that, then you will cry, 'Away with the world, away with my pleasures; nothing can comfort me now but Christ;' why, then, will you not be of the same mind now? When the world cries, 'Away with this holiness, and praying, and talking of heaven! Give us our sports, and our profits, and the customs of our forefathers,' that is, "Away with Christ, and give us Barabbas," then do ye cry, 'Away with all these, and give us Christ.'

O, if it might stand with the will of God that I might choose what effect this sermon should have upon your hearts, verily, it should be nothing that should hurt you in the least; but this it should be, it should now be to fasten upon your souls, and pierce into your consciences, as an arrow that is drawn out of the quiver of God; it should follow thee home to thy house, and bring thee down on thy knees in secret, and make thee there lament thy case, and cry out in the bitterness of thy spirit, 'Lord, I am the sinner that have neglected thee; I have tasted more sweetness in the world than in thy blood, and taken more pleasure in my earthly labors and delights than I have done in praying to thee, or meditating on thee; I have complimented with thee by a cold profession, but my heart was never set upon thee.' And here should it make thee lie in tears and prayers, and follow Christ with thy cries and complaints, till he should take thee up from the dust, and assure thee of his pardon, and change thy heart, and close it with his own. If thou wert the dearest friend that I have in the world, this is the success that I would wish this sermon with thy soul, that it might be as a voice still sounding in thine ears, that when thou art next in thy sinful company or delight, thou mightest, as it were, hear this voice in thy conscience, 'Is this thine obedience to him that bought thee?' That when thou art next forgetting Christ, and neglecting his worship in secret, or in thy family, or public, thou mightest see this sentence, as it were,

written upon thy wall, "Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and thou perish." That thou mightest see it, as it were, written upon the tester of thy bed, as often as thou liest down in an unregenerate state; and that it may keep thine eyes waking, and thy soul disquieted, and give thee no rest, till thou hadst rest in Christ. In a word, if it were but as much in my hands as it is in yours, what should become of this sermon; I hope it would be the best sermon to thee that ever thou heardest: it should lay thee at the feet of Christ, and leave thee in his arms. O that I did but know what arguments would persuade you, and what words would work thy heart hereto! If I were sure it would prevail, I would come down from the pulpit, and go from man to man, upon my knees, with this request and advice in my text: O! "kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and you perish."

But if thy hardened heart make light of all, and thou go on still in thy careless neglect of Christ, and yet wilt not believe but thou art his friend and servant, I do here, from the word, and in the name of Christ, pass this sentence upon thy soul: Thou shalt go hence, and perhaps linger out in thy security a few days more, and then be called by death to judgment, where thou shalt be doomed to this everlasting fiery wrath. Make as light of it as thou wilt, feel it thou shalt; put it off and escape if thou canst; and when thou hast done, go boast that thou hast conquered Christ. In the meantime I require this congregation to bear witness that thou hadst warning.

This to all in general: my text yet directeth me to speak more particularly to the rulers and judges of the earth.

Honorable and reverend judges, worshipful magistrates, if you were all kings and emperors, all is one to Christ, you were but high and mighty dust and ashes; Christ sendeth his summons first to you; he knows the leaders' interest in the vulgar; you are the commanders in the host of God, and must do him more service than the common soldiers: if one of you should neglect him, and stand out against him, he will begin with you in the sight of the rest, and make your greatness a stepping-stone to the honor of his justice, that the lowest may understand what they have to do when they see the greatest cannot save themselves.

Shall I say you are wiser than the people, and therefore that this admonition is needless to you? No, then I should accuse the Spirit in my text: the cedars of the earth have always hardly stooped to Christ, which hath made so many of them rooted up. Your honors are an impediment to that self-abasing which he expecteth: your dignities will more tend to blind you than to illuminate. There are few of any sort, but fewest of the great, and wise, and mighty, that are called: yet a man would think that

among those that have held out, in these trying times, there should be no need of these suspicions : but hath there not been always a succession of sinners, even of those that have beheld the ruin of their predecessors ? Who would have thought that a generation that had seen the wonders in Egypt, and had passed through the sea, and been maintained in a wilderness with constant miracles, should yet be so vile idolaters, or murmuring unbelievers, that only two of them should enter into rest ? The best of saints have need of self-suspicion and vigilancy. My advice to you, therefore, is this, learn wisdom by the examples that your eyes have seen : " Them that honor God, he will honor ; and they that despise him, shall be lightly esteemed ;" 1 Sam. ii. 30.

More particularly, let me advise you, as your duty to the Son, 1. That you take your commission and office as from him. I think it a doctrine more common than true, that ministers only are under Christ the Mediator, and magistrates are only under God as Creator. Christ is now Lord of all, and you are his servants : as there is no power but from God, so none from God but by Christ. Look upon yourselves as his vicegerents ; therefore do not that which beseemeth not a vicegerent of Christ. Remember that as you see to the execution of the laws of the land, so will Christ see that his laws be obeyed by you, or executed on you. Remember, when you sit and judge offenders, that you represent him that will judge you and all the world. And O, how lively a resemblance have you to raise your apprehension ! Think with yourselves, ' Thus shall men tremble before his bar ; thus shall they wait to hear their doom ; ' and be sure that your judgment be such as may most lively represent the judgment of Christ, that the just may depart from your bar with joy, and the unjust with sadness. Let your justice be most severe where Christ is most severe ; and so far as you can exercise your clemency, let it be about those offenses which our laws are more rigorous against than the laws of God. Be sure yet that you understand the extent of your commission, that you are not the sole officers of Jesus Christ ; you are under him as he is head over all ; ministers are under him as he is head to his church ; Eph. i. 22. Ministers are as truly the magistrates' teachers, as magistrates are their governors ; yea, by as high and undoubted authority must they oversee, govern, and command ministerially, as their Lord's ambassadors, both kings and parliaments to do whatsoever is written in this Bible, as you may command them to obey the laws of the land ; yea, and as strict a bond lieth on you to obey them so far as they speak according to this word, and keep within the bounds of their calling, as doth on them to obey you in yours ; Heb. xiii. 7. 17. Deal not with them so dissemblingly as to call them your pastors, teachers, over-

seers, and rulers, (as Scripture bids you,) and yet to learn of them but what you list, or to deny them leave to teach or advise you, further than they receive particular warrant and direction from yourselves. Should our assembly limit all their ministerial advice to the warrant and direction of parliament, and not extend it to the warrant and directions of Christ, would they not become the servants and pleasers of men? If you do not your best to set up all the government of Christ, even that in and proper to his church, as well as that which is over them, and for them, men may well think it is your own seats, and not Christ's, that you would advance. I would all the magistrates in England did well consider that Christ hath been teaching them this seven years, that their own peace or honors shall not be set up before his gospel and government; and that they do but tire themselves in vain in such attempts; then they would learn to read my text with the vulgar, *Apprehendite disciplinam*. And if the decisive power of the ministry be doubtful, yet at least they would set up their nunciative in its vigor. Christ will rule England either as subjects or as rebels; and all that kings and states do gain by opposing his rule will not add one cubit to the stature of their greatness. Yet do I not understand, by the government of Christ, a rigid conformity to the model of this or that party, or faction, with a violent extirpation of every dissenter. It is the ignorant part of divines, (alas! such there are,) who, with the simple fellow in Erasmus, do expound Paul's *hæreticum hominem devita*, i. e. *de vita tolle*. It is the essentials, and not the accidentals of discipline that I speak of: and if some disengaged standers-by be not mistaken, who have the advantage by standing out of the dust of contention, each party hath some of these essentials, and the worst is nearer the truth than his adversary is aware of: and were not the crowd and noise so great that there is no hope of being heard, one would think it should be possible to reconcile them all. However, shall the work be undone while each party striveth to have the doing of it? I was afraid when I read the beginning and end of this controversy in France. The learned Ramus pleadeth for popular church government in the synods; they rejected it as an unwarrantable novelty; the contention grew sharp, till the Parisian massacre silenced the difference. And must our differences have so sharp a cure? Will nothing unite disjoined Christians but their own blood? God forbid. But in the mean time, while we quarrel, the work standeth still. Some would have all the workers of iniquity now taken out of the kingdom of Christ, forgetting that the angels must take them out at last; Matt. xiii. Some ministers think as Myconius did, when he was called to the ministry, by a vision leading him into a cornfield, and bidding him reap: he

thought he must put in his sickle at the bottom, till he was told '*Domino meo non opus est stramine, modo aristæ in horrea colligantur.*' 'My master needeth not straw; gather but the ears, and it shall suffice.'

Once more: I know I speak not to the parliament that should remedy it, but yet that you may be helpful in your places to advance this work of Christ, let me tell you what is the thing in England that cries for reformation next our sins; even the fewness of overseers in great congregations, which maketh the greatest part of pastoral work to lie undone, and none to watch over the people in private, because they are scarce sufficient for the public work. It is pity that Musculus, that may be head of a society of students if he will continue a Papist, must weave and dig for his living if he will be a Protestant. It is pity that even Luther's wife and children must wander destitute of maintenance when he is dead, when *Æsop*, the stage-player, can leave his son one hundred and fifty thousand pounds; and *Roscius* have thirty pounds a-day for the same trade; and *Aristotle* be allowed eight hundred talents to further his search into the secrets of nature. But am I pleading that ministers may have more maintenance? No; be it just or unjust, it is none of my errand. But O that the church had more ministers, which, though at the present they cannot have for want of men, yet hereafter they might have if it were not for want of maintenance. Alas! then, what pity is it that every reformation should diminish the churches' patrimony! If the men have offended, or if the office of bishops or deans be unwarrantable, yet what have the revenues done? Is it not pity that one troop of an hundred men shall have seven commanding officers allowed them, besides others, and ten thousand, or forty thousand, shall have but one or two overseers allowed them for their souls, when the ministerial work is more laborious, and of greater concernment than the work of those commanders? I tell you again, the great thing that cries for reformation in England, next to sin, is the paucity of ministers in great congregations. I tell you this, that you may know which way to improve your several interests for the advancement of the kingdom of Christ in England.

To you, lawyers and jurors, my advice is this,—“Kiss the Son.” Remember the judgment is Christ's: every cause of truth and innocency doth he own, and will call it his cause. Woe, therefore, to him that shall oppose it! Remember every time you take a fee to plead against a cause that you know to be just, you take a fee against a cause of Christ. Will you be of counsel against him that is your Counsellor and King? Dare you plead against him that you expect should plead for you? or desire judgment, as the Jews, against your Lord and Judge? Hath he not told you that

he will say, "Inasmuch as ye did it to one of these little ones, ye did it unto me?" Remember, therefore, when a fee is offered you against the innocent, that it is a fee against Christ; and Judas's gain will be loss in the end, and will be too hot to hold long: you will be glad to bring it back, and glad if you could be well short of it, and cry, 'I have sinned in betraying the cause of the innocent.' Say not it is our calling that we must live upon. If any man of you dare upon such grounds plead a cause against his conscience, if his conscience do not plead it again more sharply against him, say I am a false prophet. If any, therefore, shall say of you, as the cardinals of Luther, '*Cur homini os non obstruitis auro, et argento,*' let the same answer serve turn, '*Hem pecuniam, non curat,*' &c. If any honorable or worshipful friend must be pleased, inquire first whether he be a better friend than Christ. Tell him the cause is Christ's, and you cannot befriend him, except he procure you a dispensation from him. When Pompey saw his soldiers ready to fly, he lay down in the passage, and told them they should tread upon him then; which stopped their flight. So suppose, every time you are drawn in to oppose a just cause, that you saw Christ saying, 'Thou must trample upon me, if thou do this.' As Luther to Melancthon, '*Ne causa fidei sit sine fide,*' so say I to you all, '*Ne causa justitiæ sit sine justitiâ.*' When you begin to be cold in a good cause, suppose you saw Christ showing you his scars, as the soldier did to Cæsar when he desired him to plead his cause; 'See here, I have done more than plead for you.' We have had those that have had a tongue for a fee or a friend, but none for Christ; but God hath now, therefore, shut their mouths, and we may say of them, as Granius by his bad lawyer, when he heard him grown hoarse, 'If they had not lost their voices, we had lost our cause.' To conclude, remember, all of you, that there is an appeal from these earthly judgments; these causes must all be heard again, your witnesses re-examined, your oaths, pleadings, and sentences reviewed, and then, as Lampridius saith of Alexander Severus, that he would vomit choler if he saw a corrupt judge, so will Christ vomit wrath, and vomit you out in wrath from his presence, if corrupt. Therefore, "kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and you perish," &c. I am sensible how I have encroached on your great affairs. Melancthon was wont to tell of a priest that begun his sermon thus, '*Scio quod vos non libenter auditis, et ego non libenter concionor, non diu igitur vos teneam.*' But I may say contrary. I am persuaded that you hear with a good will, and I am certain that I preach willingly, and therefore I was bold to hold you the longer.

A

SERMON OF REPENTANCE,

PREACHED BEFORE THE

HONORABLE HOUSE OF COMMONS,

ASSEMBLED IN PARLIAMENT

AT WESTMINSTER,

**AT THEIR LATE SOLEMN FAST FOR THE SETTling
OF THESE NATIONS,**

APRIL 30, 1660.

Tuesday, May 1, 1660.

ORDERED,

That the thanks of this House be given to **Mr. BAXTER**, for his great pains in carrying on the work of preaching and prayer, before the House, at Saint Magaret's, Westminster, yesterday, being set apart by this House, for a day of fasting and humiliation; and that he be desired to print his Sermon, and is to have the same privilege in printing the same that others have had in the like kind, and that **Mr. Swinfin** do give him notice thereof.

W. JESSOP,

Clerk of the Commons' House of Parliament.

TO THE
HONORABLE THE HOUSE OF COMMONS,
ASSEMBLED IN PARLIAMENT.

As your order for my preaching persuadeth me you meant attentively to hear, so your order for my publishing this Sermon persuadeth me that you will vouchsafe considerably to read it; (for you would not command me to publish only for others that which was prepared for, and suited to, yourselves;) which second favor if I may obtain, especially of those that need most to hear the doctrine of repentance, I shall hope that the authority of the heavenly Majesty, the great concernment of the subject, and the evidence of reason, and piercing beams of sacred verity, may yet make a deeper impression on your souls, and promote that necessary work of holiness, the fruits whereof would be effectual remedies to the diseased nations, and would conduce to your own everlasting joy. Shall I think it were presumption for me to hope for so high a reward for so short a labor? Or, shall I think it were uncharitableness not to hope for it? That here is nothing but plain English, without any of those ornaments that are by many thought necessary to make such discourses grateful to ingenious, curious auditors, proceeded not only from my present want of advantages for study, (having and using no book but a Bible and a Concordance,) but also from the humbling and serious nature of the work of the day, and from my own inclination, less affecting such ornaments in sacred discourses than formerly I have done. It is a very great honor that God and you have put upon me, to conclude so solemn a day of prayer, which was answered the next morning by your speedy, and cheerful, and unanimous acknowledgment of his majesty's authority. May I have but the second part, to promote your salvation, and the happiness of this land, by your considering and obeying these necessary truths, what greater honor could I expect on earth? Or how could you more oblige me to remain

A daily petitioner to Heaven for these mercies,
on your own and the nation's behalf,
RICHARD BAXTER.

SERMON OF REPENTANCE.

EZEK. xxxvi. 31.

THEN SHALL YE REMEMBER YOUR OWN EVIL WAYS, AND YOUR DOINGS THAT WERE NOT GOOD, AND SHALL LOATHE YOURSELVES IN YOUR OWN SIGHT, FOR YOUR INIQUITIES, AND FOR YOUR ABOMINATIONS.

THE words are a part of God's prognostics of the Jews' restoration, whose dejection he had before described. Their disease began within, and there God promiseth to work the cure. Their captivity was but the fruit of their voluntary captivity to sin, and their grief of heart was but the fruit of their hardness of heart, and their sharpest suffering of their foul pollutions; and, therefore, God promiseth a methodical cure, even to take away their old and stony heart, and cleanse them from their filthiness, and so to ease them by the removing of the cause. How far, and when, this promise was to be made good to the Jews, as nationally considered, is a matter that requires a longer disposition than my limited hour will allow; and the decision of that case is needless, as to my present end and work. That this is part of the gospel covenant, and applicable to us believers now, the Holy Ghost, in the Epistle to the Hebrews, hath assured us.

The text is the description of the repentance of the people, in which the beginning of their recovery doth consist, and by which the rest must be attained. The evil which they repent of is, in general, all their iniquities, but especially their idolatry, called their abominations. Their repentance is foretold, as it is in the understanding and thoughts, and as in the will and affections. In the former, it is called "remembering their own evil ways." In the latter, it is called "loathing themselves in their own sight, for their iniquities and abominations." Montanus translates it *reprobabit in vos*; but in c. 20, v. 43, *fastidietis vos*. The same sense is intended by the other versions. When the Septuagint translates it by displeasure, and the Chaldee by groaning, and the Syriac by the wrinkling of the face, and the Sept. in c. xx. 43, by smiting

on the face, the Arabic here perverts the sense by turning all to negatives ye shall not, &c., yet in c. xx. 43. he turns it by the tearing of the face. I have purposely chosen a text that needs no long explication, that, in obedience to the foreseen straits of time, I may be excused from that part, and be more on the more necessary. This observation contains the meaning of the text, which, by God's assistance, I shall now insist on, viz.

The remembering of their own iniquities, and loathing themselves for them, is the sign of a repenting people and the prognostic of their restoration, so far as deliverance may be here expected.

For the opening of which, observe these things following:—

2. It is not all kind of remembering that will prove you penitent. The impenitent remember their sin, that they may commit it; they remember it with love, desire, and delight: the heart of the worldling goeth after his airy or earthen idol. The heart of the ambitious feedeth on his vain glory, and the people's breath; and the filthy fornicator is delighted in the thoughts of the object and exercise of his lust. But it is a remembering, (1.) from a deep conviction of the evil and odiousness of sin. (2.) And with abhorrence and self-loathing. (3.) That leadeth to a resolved and vigilant forsaking, that is the proof of true repentance, and the prognostic of a people's restoration.

3. And it is not all self-loathing that will signify true repenting, for there is a self-loathing of the desperate, and the damned soul that abhorreth itself, and teareth and tormenteth itself, and cannot be restrained from self-revenge, when it finds that it hath willfully, foolishly, and obstinately, been its own destroyer. But the self-loathing of the truly penitent hath these following properties:—

(1.) It proceedeth from the predominant love of God, whom we have abused and offended. The more we love him, the more we loathe what is contrary to him.

(2.) It is much excited by the observation and sense of his exceeding mercies, and is conjunct with gratitude.

(3.) It continueth and increaseth under the greatest assurance of forgiveness, and sense of love, and dieth not when we think we are out of danger.

(4.) It containeth a loathing of sin as sin, and a love of holiness as such, and not only a love of ease and peace, and a loathing of sin, as the cause of suffering.

(5.) It resolveth the soul against returning to its former course, and resolveth it for an entire devotedness to God for the time to come.

(6.) It deeply engageth the penitent in a conflict against the flesh, and maketh him victorious, and setteth him to work in a life of holiness, as his trade and principal business in the world.

(7.) It bringeth him to a delight in God and holiness, and a delight in himself, so far as he findeth God and heaven, and holiness within him. He can, with some comfort and content, own himself and his conversation, so far as God (victorious against his carnal self) appeareth in him. For, as he loveth Christ in the rest of his members, so must he in himself. And this is it that self-loathing doth prepare for.

This must be the self-loathing that must afford you comfort, as a penitent people in the way to restoration.

1. Where you see it is implied that, materially, it containeth these common acts. (1.) Accusing and condemning thoughts against ourselves. It is a judging of ourselves, and makes us call ourselves, with Paul, foolish, disobedient, deceived; yea, mad; (as Acts xxvi. 11.) and with David to say, I have done foolishly; 2 Sam. xxiv. 10. (2.) It containeth a deep distaste and displeasure with ourselves, and a heart rising against ourselves. (3.) As also a holy indignation against ourselves, as apprehending that we have played the enemies to ourselves and God. (4.) And it possesseth us with grief and trouble at our miscarriages. So that a soul, in this condition, is sick of itself, and vexed with its self-procured woe.

2. Note, also, that when self-loathing proceedeth from mere conviction, and is without the love of God and holiness, it is but the tormentor of the soul, and runs it deeper into sin, provoking men here to destroy their lives; and in hell it is the never-dying worm.

3. Note, also, that it is themselves that they are said to loathe, because it is ourselves that conscience hath to do with, as witness, and as judge; it is ourselves that are naturally nearest to ourselves, and our own affairs that we are most concerned in. It is ourselves that must have the joy or torment, and, therefore, it is our own actions and estate that we have first to mind. Though yet, as magistrates, ministers, and neighbors, we must next mind others, and must loathe iniquity wherever we meet it, and a vile person must be condemned in our eyes, while we honor them that fear the Lord; Psalm xv. 4.

And as by nature, so in the commandment, God hath given to every man the first and principal care and charge of himself, and his own salvation, and consequently of his own ways, so that we may with less suspicion loathe ourselves than others, and are more obliged to do it.

4. Note, also, that it is not for our troubles, or our disgrace, or our bodily deformities, or infirmities, or for our poverty and want, that penitents are said to loathe themselves, but for their iniquities and abominations. For, (1.) This loathing is a kind of justice done upon ourselves, and therefore is exercised, not for mere in-

felicities, but for crimes. Conscience keepeth in its own court, and meddleth but with moral evils, which we are conscious of. (2.) And also it is sin that is loathed by God, and makes the creature loathsome in his eyes; and repentance conformeth the soul to God, and therefore causeth us to loathe as he doth, and on his grounds. And, (3.) There is no evil but sin, and that which sin procureth; and therefore it is for sin that the penitent loathes himself.

5. Note, also, that it is here implied, that, till repentance, there was none of this remembering of sin, and loathing of themselves. They begin with our conversion, and, as before described, are proper to the truly penitent. For, to consider them distinctly, (1.) The deluded soul that is bewitched by his own concupiscence is so taken up with remembering of his fleshly pleasures, and his alluring objects, and his honors, and his earthly businesses and store, that he hath no mind or room for the remembering of his foolish, odious sin, and the wrong that he is doing to God, and to himself. Death is oblivious, and sleep hath but a distracted, ineffectual memory, that stirreth not the busy dreamer from his pillow, nor despatcheth any of the work he dreams of. And the unconverted are asleep, and dead in sin. The crowd of cares and worldly businesses, and the tumultuous noise of foolish sports, and other sensual passions and delights, do take up the minds of the unconverted, and turn them from the observation of the things of greatest everlasting consequence. They have a memory for sin and the flesh, to which they are alive, but not for things spiritual and eternal, to which they are dead. They remember not God himself as God, with any effectual remembrance. God is not in all their thoughts; Psal. x. 4. They live as without him in the world; Eph. ii. 12. And if they remember not God, they cannot remember sin as sin, whose malignity lieth in its opposition to the will and holiness of God. They forget themselves, and therefore must needs forget their sinfulness. Alas! they remember not effectually and savingly what they are, and why they were made, and what they are daily nourished and preserved for, and what business they have to do here in the world. They forget that they have souls to save or lose, that must live in endless joy or torment. You may see by their careless and ungodly lives that they forget it. You may hear by their carnal, frothy speech that they forget it. And he that remembereth not himself, remembereth not his own concerns. They forget the end to which they tend; the life which they must live forever; the matters everlasting, whose greatness and duration, one would think, should so command the mind of man, and take up all his thoughts and cares, in despite of all the little trifling matters that would avert them, that we should think almost of nothing else. Yet

these, even these, that nothing but deadness or madness should make a reasonable creature to forget, are daily forgotten by the unconverted soul, or ineffectually remembered. Many a time have I admired that men of reason who are here to-day, and in endless joy or misery to-morrow, should be able to forget such inexpressible concernments! Methinks they should easier forget to rise, or dress themselves, or to eat, or drink, or any thing, than forget an endless life, which is so undoubtedly certain, and so near. A man that hath a cause to be heard to-morrow, in which his life or honor is concerned, cannot forget it; a wretch that is condemned to die to-morrow, cannot forget it. And yet poor sinners, that are continually uncertain to live an hour, and certain speedily to see the majesty of the Lord, to their unconceivable joy or terror, as sure as now they live on earth, can forget these things for which they have their memory; and which, one would think, should drown the matters of this world, as the report of a cannon doth a whisper, or as the sun obscureth the poorest glow-worm. O wonderful stupidity of an unrenewed soul! O wonderful folly and distractedness of the ungodly! That ever man can forget, I say again, that they can forget, eternal joy, eternal woe, and the Eternal God, and the place of their eternal, unchangeable abode, when they stand even at the door, and are passing in, and there is but the thin veil of flesh between them and that amazing sight, that eternal gulf; and they are daily dying, and even stepping in. O, could you keep your honors here forever; could you ever wear that gay attire, and gratify your flesh with meats, and drinks, and sports, and lusts; could you ever keep your rule and dignity, or your earthly life in any state, you had some little poor excuse for not remembering the eternal things, (as a man hath that preferreth his candle before the sun;) but when death is near and inexorable, and you are sure to die as you are sure to live; when every man of you that sitteth in these seats to-day can say, 'I must shortly be in another world, where all the pomp and pleasure of this world will be forgotten, or remembered but as my sin and folly,' one would think it were impossible for any of you to be ungodly, and to remember the trifles and nothings of the world, while you forget that everlasting all, whose reality, necessity, magnitude, excellency, concernment, and duration, are such as should take up all the powers of your souls, and continually command the service and attendance of your thoughts against all seekers, and contemptible competitors whatsoever. But, alas! though you have the greatest helps, (in subservience to these commanding objects,) yet will you not remember the matters which alone deserve remembrance. Sometimes the preachers of the gospel do call on you to remember; to remember your God, your souls, your Savior, your

ends, and everlasting state, and to remember your misdoings, that you may loathe yourselves, and in returning may find life; but some either scorn them, or quarrel with them, or sleep under their most serious and importunate solicitations, or carelessly and stupidly give them the hearing, as if they spoke but words of course, or treated about uncertain things, and spoke not to them from the God of heaven, and about the things that every man of you shall very shortly see or feel. Sometimes you are called on by the voice of conscience within, to remember the unreasonableness and evil of your ways; but conscience is silenced, because it will not be conformable to your lusts. But little do you think what a part your too late awakened conscience hath yet to play, if you give it not a more sober hearing in time. Sometimes the voice of common calamities, and national or local judgments, call on you to remember the evil of your ways; but that which is spoken to all, or many, doth seem to most of them as spoken unto none. Sometimes the voice of particular judgments, seizing upon your families, persons or estates, doth call on you to remember the evil of your ways; and one would think the rod should make you hear. And yet you most disregardingly go on, or are only frightened into a few good purposes and promises, that die when health and prosperity revive. Sometimes God joineth all these together, and pleadeth both by word and rod, and addeth also the inward pleadings of his Spirit; he sets your sins in order before you, (Psalm l. 21.) and expostulateth with you the cause of his abused love, despised sovereignty, and provoked justice; and asketh the poor sinner, 'Hast thou done well to waste thy life in vanity, to serve thy flesh, to forget thy God, thy soul, thy happiness; and to thrust his services into corners, and give him but the odious leavings of the flesh?' But these pleas of God cannot be heard. O horrible impiety! By his own creatures; by reasonable creatures (that would scorn to be called fools or madmen) the God of heaven cannot be heard! The brutish, passionate, furious sinners will not remember. They will not remember what they have done, and with whom it is that they have to do, and what God thinks and saith of men in their condition; and whither it is that the flesh will lead them; and what will be the fruit and end of all their lusts and vanities; and how they will look back on all at last; and whether an holy or a sensual life will be sweetest to a dying man; and what judgment it is that they will all be of, in the controversy between the flesh and Spirit, at the latter end. Though they have life and time, and reason for their uses, we cannot entreat them to consider of these things in time. If our lives lay on it, as their salvation, which is more, lieth on it, we cannot entreat them. If we should kneel to them, and with tears beseech them,

but once a day, or once a week, to bestow one hour in serious consideration of their latter end, and the everlasting state of saints and sinners, and of the equity of the holy ways of God, and the iniquity of their own, we cannot prevail with them. Till the God of heaven doth overrule them, we cannot prevail. The witness that we are forced to bear is sad: it is sad to us; but it will be sadder to these rebels, that shall one day know that God will not be outfaced; and that they may sooner shake the stable earth, and darken the sun by their reproaches, than outbrave the Judge of all the world, or by all their cavils, wranglings, or scornings, escape the hands of his revenging justice.

But if ever the Lord will save these souls, he will bring their misdoings to their remembrance. He will make them think of that which they were so loath to think on. You cannot now abide these troubling and severe meditations; the thoughts of God, and heaven, and hell; the thoughts of your sins, and of your duties, are melancholy, unwelcome thoughts to you; but O, that you could foreknow the thoughts that you shall have of all these things! even the proudest, scornful, hardened sinner, that heareth me this day, shall shortly have such a remembrance as will make him wonder at his present blockishness. O, when the irresistible power of Heaven shall open all your sins before you, and command you to remember them, and to remember the time, and place, and persons, and all the circumstances of them; what a change will it make upon the most stout or stubborn of the sons of men; what a difference will there then be between that trembling, self-tormenting soul, and the same that now, in his gallantry, can make light of all these things, and call the messenger of Christ, who warneth him, a Puritan, or a doting fool! Your memories now are somewhat subject to your wills; and if you will not think of your own, your chief, your everlasting concerns, you may choose. If you will choose rather to employ your noble souls on beastly lusts, and waste your thoughts on things of nought, you may take your course, and chase a feather with a childish world, till, overtaking it, you see you have lost your labor. But when justice takes the work in hand, your thoughts shall be no more subject to your wills; you shall then remember that which you are full loath to remember, and would give a world that you could forget. O, then one cup of the waters of oblivion would be of inestimable value to the damned! O, what would they not give that they could but forget the time they had lost, the mercy they abused, the grace which they refused, the holy servants of Christ whom they despised, the willful sins which they committed, and the many duties which they willfully omitted! I have often thought of their case when I have dealt with melancholy or despairing persons. If I advised

them to cast away such thoughts, and turn their minds to other things, they tell me they cannot; it is not in their power; and I have long found that I may almost as well persuade a broken head to give over aching. But when the holy God shall purposely pour out the vials of his wrath on the consciences of the ungodly, and open the books, and show them all that ever they have done, with all the aggravations, how, then, shall these worms be able to resist?

And now, I beseech you all, consider, is it not better to remember your sins on earth, than in hell? before your Physician, than before your Judge? for your cure, than for your torment? Give me leave, then, before I go any further, to address myself to you as the messenger of the Lord, with this importunate request, both as you stand here in your private and your public capacities. In the name of the God of heaven, I charge you, remember the lives that you have led! remember what you have been doing in the world! remember how you have spent your time! and whether, indeed, it is God that you have been serving, and heaven that you have been seeking, and holiness and righteousness that you have been practicing in the world till now! Are your sins so small, so venial, so few, that you can find no employment on them for your memories? Or is the offending of the Eternal God so slight and safe a thing as not to need your consideration? God forbid you should have such atheistical conceits! Surely God made not his laws for nought; nor doth he make such a stir by his word, and messengers, and providences, against an harmless thing; nor doth he threaten hell to men for small, indifferent matters; nor did Christ need to have died, and done all that he hath done, to cure a small and safe disease. Surely that which the God of heaven is pleased to threaten with everlasting punishment, the greatest of you all should vouchsafe to think on, and with greatest fear and soberness to remember.

It is a pitiful thing, that with men, with gentlemen, with professing Christians, God's matters, and their own matters, their greatest matters, should seem unworthy to be thought on; when they have thoughts for their honors, and their lands, and friends; and thoughts for their children, their servants, and provision; and thoughts for their horses, and their dogs, and sports. Is God and heaven less worthy than these? are death and judgment matters of less moment? Gentlemen, you would take it ill to have your wisdom undervalued, and your reason questioned; for your honor's sake do not make it contemptible yourselves in the eyes of all that are truly wise. It is the nobleness of objects that most ennoble your faculties, and the baseness of objects doth abase them. If brutish objects be your employment and delight, do I need to tell you what you make yourselves? If you would be noble indeed, let God and everlasting glory be the object of your faculties; if you

would be great, then dwell on greatest things: if you would be high, then seek the things that are above, and not the sordid things of earth, (Col. iii. 1—3.) and if you would be safe, look after the enemies of your peace; and, as you had thoughts of sin that led you to commit it, entertain the thoughts that would lead you to abhor it. O that I might have but the grant of this reasonable request from you, that, among all your thoughts, you would bestow now and then an hour in the serious thoughts of your misdoings, and soberly, in your retirement between God and your souls, remember the paths that you have trod; and whether you have lived for the work for which you were created. One sober hour of such employment might be the happiest hour that ever you spent, and give you more comfort at your final hour than all the former hours of your life; and might lead you into that new and holy life, which you may review with everlasting comfort.

Truly, gentlemen, I have long observed that Satan's advantage lieth so much on the brutish side, that the work of man's conversion is so much carried on by God's exciting of our reason, and that the misery of the ungodly is, that they have reason in faculty, and not in use, in the greatest thing, that I persuade you to this duty with the greater hopes; if the Lord will but persuade you to retire from vanity, and soberly exercise your reason, and consider your ways, and say, What have we done? And what is it that God would have us do? And what shall we wish we had done at last? I say, could you now be but prevailed with to bestow as many hours on this work, as you have cast away in idleness, or worse, I should not doubt but I should shortly see the faces of many of you in heaven that have been recovered by the use of this advice. It is a thousand pities, that men are thought wise enough to be intrusted with the public safety, and to be the physicians of a broken state, should have any among them that are untrusty to their God, and have not the reason to remember their misdoings, and prevent the danger of their immortal souls. Will you sit all day here to find out the remedy of a diseased land; and will you not be entreated by God or man to sit down one hour, and find out the disease of, and remedy for, your own souls? Are those men likely to take care of the happiness of so many thousands, that will still be so careless of themselves? Once more, therefore, I entreat you, remember your misdoings, lest God remember them; and bless the Lord that called you this day, by the voice of mercy, to remember them upon terms of faith and hope. Remembered they must be, first or last. And believe it, this is far unlike the sad remembrance at judgment, and in the place of woe and desperation.

And I beseech you observe here, that it is your own misdoings that you must remember. Had it been only the sins of other men

especially those that differ from you, or have wronged you, or stand against your interest, how easily would the duty have been performed! How little need should I have had to press it with all this importunity! How confident should I be that I could convert the most, if this were the conversion! It grieves my soul to hear how quick and constant, high and low, learned and unlearned, are at this uncharitable, contumelious remembering of the faults of others; how cunningly they can bring in their insinuated accusations; how odiously they can aggravate the smallest faults, where difference causeth them to distaste the person; how ordinarily they judge of actions by the persons, as if any thing were a crime that is done by such as they dislike, and all were virtue that is done by those that fit their humors; how commonly brethren have made it a part of their service of God to speak or write uncharitably of his servants, laboring to destroy the hearer's charity, which had more need, in this unhappy time, of the bellows than the water; how usual it is with the ignorant that cannot reach the truth, and the impious that cannot bear it, to call such heretics that know more than themselves, and to call such precisians, Puritans, (or some such name which hell invents as there is occasion,) who dare not be so bad as they; how odious, men pretending to much gravity, learning, and moderation, do labor to make those that are dearer to God; and what a heart they have to widen differences, and make a sea of every lake; and that, perhaps, under pretense of blaming the uncharitableness of others; how far the very sermons and discourses of some learned men are from the common rule of doing as we would be done by; and how loudly they proclaim that such men love not their neighbors as themselves; the most uncharitable words seeming moderate, which they give; and all called intemperate that savoreth not of flattery, which they receive! Were I calling the several exasperated factions, now in England, to remember the misdoings of their supposed adversaries, what full-mouthed and debasing confessions would they make! What monsters of heresy, and schism, of impiety, treason, and rebellion, of perjury and perfidiousness, would too many make of the faults of others, while they extenuate their own to almost nothing! It is a wonder to observe how the case doth alter with the most, when that which was their adversary's case becomes their own. The very prayers of the godly, and their care of their salvation, and their fear of sinning, doth seem their crime in the eyes of some that easily bear the guilt of swearing, drunkenness, sensuality, filthiness, and neglect of duty in themselves, as a tolerable burden.

But if ever God indeed convert you, (though you will pity others, yet) he will teach you to begin at home, and take the beam out of your own eyes, and to cry out, 'I am the miserable sinner.'

And lest these generals seem insufficient for us to confess on such a day as this, and lest yet your memories should need more help, is it not my duty to remind you of some particulars? which yet I shall not do by way of accusation, but of inquiry. Far be it from me to judge so hardly of you, that when you come hither to lament your sins, you cannot with patience endure to be told of them.

1. Inquire, then, whether there be none among you that live a sensual, careless life, clothed with the best, and faring deliciously every day! In rioting and drunkenness, chambering and wantonness, strife and envying, not putting on Christ, nor walking in the Spirit, but making provision for the flesh, to satisfy the lusts thereof; Rom. xiii. 13, 14. Is there none among you that spend your precious time in vanities, that is allowed you to prepare for life eternal? That have time to waste in compliments, and fruitless talk, and visits; in gaming, and unnecessary recreations; in excessive feasting and entertainments, while God is neglected, and your souls forgotten, and you can never find an hour in a day to make ready for the life which you must live forever? Is there none among you that would take the man for a Puritan, or fanatic, that should employ but half so much time for his soul, and in the services of the Lord, as you do in unnecessary sports and pleasures, and pampering your flesh? Gentlemen, if there be any such among you, as you love your souls, remember your misdoings, and bewail these abominations before the Lord, in this day of your professed humiliation.

2. Inquire whether there be none among you, that, being strangers to the new birth, and to the inward workings of the Spirit of Christ upon the soul, do also distaste a holy life, and make it the matter of your reproach, and pacify your accusing consciences with a religion made up of mere words, and heartless outside, and so much obedience as your fleshly pleasures will admit, accounting those that go beyond you, especially if they differ from you in your modes and circumstances, to be but a company of proud, Pharisaical, self-conceited hypocrites, and those whom you desire to suppress. If there be one such person here, I would entreat him to remember that it is the solemn asseveration of our Judge, that, "except a man be converted, and be born again, of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven;" (John iii. 3—5; Matt. xviii. 3;) that "if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his;" (Rom. viii. 9.) that "if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature; old things are passed away, and all things are become new;" (2 Cor. v. 17.) that "without holiness none shall see God;" (Heb. xii. 14.) that "the wisdom that is from above is first pure, and then peaceable;" (Jam. iii.

17.) that "God is a Spirit, and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth;" (John iv. 23, 24.) that "they worship in vain that teach for doctrines the commandments of men;" (Matt. xv. 8, 9.) and that "except your righteousness shall exceed that of the Scribes and Pharisees ye shall in no wise enter into the kingdom of heaven;" Matt. v. 20. And I desire you to remember that "it is hard to kick against the pricks, and to prosper in rage against the Lord; and that it is better for that man that offendeth one of his little ones to have a millstone fastened to his neck, and to have been cast into the bottom of the sea;" Matt. xviii. 6. It is a sure and grievous condemnation that waiteth for all that are themselves unholy; but to the haters or despisers of the holy laws and servants of the Lord how much more grievous a punishment is reserved!

3. Inquire also whether there be none among you that let loose your passions on your inferiors, and oppress your poor tenants, and make them groan under the task, or at least do little to relieve the needy, nor study not to serve the Lord with your estates, but sacrifice all to the pleasing of your flesh, unless it be some inconsiderable pittance, or fruitless drops, that are unproportionable to your receivings. If there be any such, let them remember their iniquities, and cry for mercy before the cry of the poor to heaven do bring down vengeance from him that hath promised to hear their cry, and speedily to avenge them; Luke xviii. 7, 8.

4. Inquire whether there be none that live the life of Sodom, in pride, fullness of bread, and idleness; (Ezek. xvi. 49.) and that are puffed up with their estates and dignities, and are strangers to the humility, meekness, patience, and self-denial of the saints; that ruffle in bravery, and contend more zealously for their honor and preëminence than for the honor and interest of the Lord. For pride of apparel, it was wont to be taken for a childish or womanish kind of vice, below a man; but it is now observed among the gallants, that (except in spots) the notes of vanity are more legibly written on the hair and dress of a multitude of effeminate males than on the females; proclaiming to the world that pride, which, one would think, even pride itself should have concealed; and calling by these signs to the beholders to observe the emptiness of their minds, and how void they are of that inward worth which is the honor of a Christian and of a man. It being a marvel to see a man of learning, gravity, wisdom, and the fear of God, appear in such antic dress.

I have done with the first part, "the remembering of your own evil ways and doings." I beseech you practically go along with me to the next; "The loathing of yourselves in your own eyes, for all your iniquities and abominations."

Every true convert doth thus loathe himself for his iniquities;

and when God will restore a punished people upon their repentance, he bringeth them to this loathing of themselves.

1. A converted soul hath a new and heavenly light to help him to see those matters of humbling use which others see not.

2. More particularly, he hath the knowledge of sin and of himself. He seeth the odious face of sin, and seeth how much his heart and life, in his sinful days, abounded with it, and how great a measure yet remains.

3. He hath seen by faith the Lord himself; the majesty, the holiness, the jealousy, the goodness of the eternal God whom he hath offended, and therefore must needs abhor himself; Job xlii. 6.

4. He hath tasted of God's displeasure against him for his sin, already. God himself hath set it home, and awakened his conscience, and held it on, till he hath made him understand that the consuming fire is not to be jested with.

5. He hath seen Christ crucified, and mourned over him. This is the glass that doth most clearly show the ugliness of sin; and here he hath learned to abhor himself.

6. He hath foreseen, by faith, the end of sin, and the doleful recompense of the ungodly: his faith beholdeth the misery of damned souls, and the glory which sinners cast away. He heareth them beforehand, repenting, and lamenting, and crying out of their former folly, and wishing in vain that all this were to do again, and that they might once more be tried with another life, and resolving then how holily, how self-denyingly they would live! He knows that if sin had had its way, he had been plunged into this hellish misery himself; and therefore he must needs loathe himself for his iniquities.

7. Moreover, the true convert hath had the liveliest taste of mercy, of the blood of Christ, of the offers and covenant of grace, of reprieving mercy, of pardoning mercy, of healing and preserving mercy, and of the unspeakable mercy contained in the promise of everlasting life; and to find that he hath sinned against all this mercy, doth constrain him to abhor himself.

8. And it is only the true convert that hath a new and holy nature, contrary to sin; and, therefore, as a man that hath the leprosy doth loathe himself because his nature is contrary to his disease, so is it (though operating in a freer way) with a converted soul as to the leprosy of sin. O, how he loathes the remnants of his pride and passion; his excessive cares, desires, and fears; the backwardness of his soul to God and heaven! Sin is to the new nature of every true believer as the food of a swine to the stomach of a man; if he have eaten it, he hath no rest until he hath vomited it up; and then, when he looketh on his vomit, he loatheth himself to think how long he kept such filth within him; and that yet in the bottom there is some remains.

9. The true convert is one that is much at home ; his heart is the vineyard which he is daily dressing ; his work is ordinarily about it ; and, therefore, he is acquainted with those secret sins, and daily failings, which ungodly men, that are strangers to themselves, do not observe, though they have them in dominion.

10. Lastly, a serious Christian is a workman of the Lord's, and daily busy at the exercise of his graces, and, therefore, hath occasion to observe his weaknesses, and failings, and from sad experience is forced to abhor himself.

But with careless, unrenewed souls, it is not so : some of them may have a mild, ingenuous disposition, and the knowledge of their unworthiness ; and customarily they will confess such sins as are small disgrace to them, or cannot be hid ; or under the terrible gripes of conscience in the hour of distress, and at the approach of death, they will do more ; and abhor themselves, perhaps, as Judas did ; or make a constrained confession through the power of fear ; but so far are they from this loathing of themselves for all their iniquities, that sin is to them as their element, their food, their nature, and their friend.

And now, honorable, worthy, and beloved auditors, it is my duty to inquire, and to provoke you to inquire, whether the representative body of the commons of England, and each man of you in particular, be thus affected to yourselves or not. It concerns you to inquire of it, as you love your souls, and love not to see the death-marks of impenitency on them. It concerneth us to inquire of it, as we love you and the nation, and would fain see the marks of God's return in mercy to us, in your self-loathing and return to God. Let conscience speak as before the Lord that sees your hearts, and will shortly judge you : have you had such a sight of your natural and actual sin and misery, of your neglect of God, your contempt of heaven, your loss of precious, hasty time, your worldly, fleshly, sensual lives, and your omission of the great and holy works which you were made for ? Have you had such a sight and sense of these as hath filled your souls with shame and sorrow, and caused you, in tears, or hearty grief, to lament your sinful, careless lives, before the Lord ? Do you loathe yourselves for all this, as being vile in your own eyes, and each man say, 'What a wretch was I ! what an unreasonable, self-hating wretch, to do all this against myself ! what an unnatural wretch ! what a monster of rebellion and ingratitude, to do all this against the Lord of love and mercy ! what a deceived, foolish wretch, to prefer the pleasing of my lusts and senses, a pleasure that perisheth in the fruition, and is past as soon as it is received, before the manly pleasures of the saints, and before the soul's delight in God, and before the unspeakable, everlasting pleasures ! Was there any comparison between the brutish pleasures of the flesh, and the spiritual

delights of a believing soul, in looking to the endless pleasure which we shall have with all the saints and angels in the glorious presence of the Lord? Was God and glory worth no more than to be cast aside for satiating of an unsatisfiable flesh and fancy, and to be sold for a harlot, for a forbidden cup, for a little air of popular applause, or for a burdensome load of wealth and power, for so short a time? Where is now the gain and pleasure of all my former sins? What have they left but a sting behind them? How near is the time when my departing soul must look back on all the pleasures and profits that ever I enjoyed, as a dream when one awaketh; as delusory vanities, that have done all for me that ever they will do, and all is but to bring my flesh unto corruption, (Gal. vi. 8.) and my soul to this distressing grief and fear! and then I must sing and laugh no more! I must brave it out in pride no more! I must know the pleasures of the flesh no more! but be leveled with the poorest, and my body laid in loathsome darkness, and my soul appear before that God whom I so willfully refused to obey and honor. O, wretch that I am! where was my understanding, when I played so boldly with the flames of hell, the wrath of God, the poison of sin! when God stood by, and yet I sinned! when conscience did rebuke me, and yet I sinned! when heaven or hell were hard at hand, and yet I sinned! when, to please my God and save my soul, I would not forbear a filthy lust, or forbidden vanity of no worth! when I would not be persuaded to a holy, heavenly, watchful life, though all my hopes of heaven lay on it! I am ashamed of myself; I am confounded in the remembrance of my willful, self-destroying folly! I loathe myself for all my abominations! O that I had lived in beggary and rags when I lived in sin! And O that I had lived with God in a prison, or in a wilderness, when I refused a holy, heavenly life, for the love of a deceitful world! Will the Lord pardon what is past, I am resolved through his grace to do so no more, but to loathe that filth that I took for pleasure, and to abhor that sin that I made my sport, and to die to the glory and riches of the world, which I made my idol; and to live entirely to that God that I did so long ago and so unworthily neglect; and to seek that treasure, that kingdom, that delight, that will fully satisfy my expectation, and answer all my care and labor, with such infinite advantage. Holiness or nothing shall be my work and life, and heaven or nothing shall be my portion and felicity.

These are the thoughts, the affections, the breathing of every regenerate, gracious soul. For your souls' sake inquire now, is it thus with you. Or have you thus returned with self-loathing to the Lord, and firmly engaged your souls to him at your entrance into a holy life? I must be plain with you, gentlemen, or I shall be unfaithful; and I must deal closely with you, or I cannot deal

honestly and truly with you. As sure as you live, yea, as sure as the word of God is true, you must all be such converted men, and loathe yourselves for your iniquities, or be condemned as impenitent to everlasting fire. To hide this from you, is but to deceive you, and that in a matter of a thousand times greater moment than your lives. Perhaps I could have made shift, instead of such serious admonitions, to have wasted this hour in flashy oratory, and neat expressions, and ornaments of reading, and other things that are the too common matters of ostentation with men that preach God's word in jest, and believe not what they are persuading others to believe. Or, if you think I could not, I am indifferent, as not much affecting the honor of being able to offend the Lord, and wrong your souls, by dallying with holy things. Flattery in these things of soul concernment is a selfish villany, that hath but a very short reward; and those that are pleased with it to-day may curse the flatterer forever. Again, therefore, let me tell you that which I think you will confess, that it is not your greatness, nor your high looks, nor the gallantry of your spirits, that scorns to be thus humbled, that will serve your turn when God shall deal with you, or save your carcasses from rottenness and dust, or your guilty souls from the wrath of the Almighty. Nor is it your contempt of the threatenings of the Lord, and your stupid neglect, or scorning at the message, that will endure when the sudden, irresistible light shall come in upon you, and convince you, or you shall see and feel what now you refuse to believe! Nor is it your outside, hypocritical religion, made up of mere words, or ceremonies, and giving your souls but the leavings of the flesh, and making God an underling to the world, that will do any more to save your souls than the picture of a feast to feed your bodies. Nor is it the stiffest conceits that you shall be saved in an unconverted state, or that you are sanctified when you are not, that will do any more to keep you from damnation than a conceit, that you shall never die, will do to keep you here forever. Gentlemen, though you are all here in health, and dignity, and honor, to-day, how little a while is it, alas! how little, until you shall be every man in heaven or hell! Unless you are infidels, you dare not deny it. And it is only Christ and a holy life that is your way to heaven; and only sin, and the neglect of Christ and holiness, that can undo you. Look, therefore, upon sin as you should look upon that which would cast you into hell, and is daily undermining all your hopes. O, that this honorable assembly could know it in some measure as it shall be shortly known; and judge of it as men do, when time is past, and delusions vanished, and all men are awakened from their fleshly dreams, and their naked souls have seen the Lord! O, then, what laws would you make against sin! How speedily would you join your strength against it as against the only enemy

of your peace, and as against a fire in your houses, or a plague that were broken out upon the city where you are! O, then, how zealously would you all concur to promote the interest of holiness in the land, and studiously encourage the servants of the Lord! How severely would you deal with those that, by making a mock of godliness, do hinder the salvation of the people's souls! How carefully would you help the laborers that are sent to guide men in the holy path! and yourselves would go before the nation as an example of penitent self-loathing for your sins, and hearty conversion to the Lord! Is this your duty now? or is it not? If you cannot deny it, I warn you from the Lord, do not neglect it; and do not, by your disobedience to a convinced conscience, prepare for a tormenting conscience. If you know your Master's will, and do it not, you shall be beaten with many stripes.

And your public capacity and work doth make your repentance and holiness needful to others as well as to yourselves. Had we none to govern us, but such as entirely subject themselves to the government of Christ; and none to make us laws, but such as have his law transcribed upon their hearts, O, what a happy people should we be! Men are unlikely to make strict laws against the vices which they love and live in; or if they make them, they are more unlikely to execute them. We can expect no great help against drunkenness, swearing, gaming, filthiness, and profaneness, from men that love these abominations so well, as that they will rather part with God and their salvation than they will let them go. All men are born with a serpentine malice and enmity against the seed of Christ, which is rooted in their very natures. Custom in sin increaseth this to malignity; and it is only renewed grace that doth overcome it. If, therefore, there should be any among our rulers that are not cured of this mortal malady, what friendship can be expected from them to the cause and servants of the Lord? If you are all the children of God yourselves, and heaven be your end, and holiness your delight and business, it will then be your principal care to encourage it, and help the people to the happiness that you have found yourselves. But if in any the original (increased) enmity to God and godliness prevail, we can expect no better (ordinarily) from such, than that they oppose the holiness which they hate, and do their worst to make us miserable. But woe to him that striveth against his Maker. Shall the thorns and briers be set in battle against the consuming fire and prevail? *Isaiah xxvii. 4.* O, therefore, for the nation's sake, begin at home and cast away the sins which you would have the nation cast away! All men can say, that ministers must teach by their lives, as well as by their doctrines; (and woe to them that do not!) and must not magistrates as well govern by their lives, as by their laws? Will you make laws which you would not have men obey? Or would

you have the people to be better than yourselves? Or can you expect to be obeyed by others, when you will not obey the God of heaven and earth yourselves? We beseech you, therefore, for the sake of a poor, distressed land, let our recovery begin with you. God looks so much at the rulers of a nation in his dealings with them, that ordinarily it goes with the people as their rulers are. Until David had numbered the people, God would not let out his wrath upon them, though it was they that were the great offenders. If we see our representative body begin in loathing themselves for all their iniquities, and turning to the Lord with all their hearts, we should yet believe that he is returning to us, and will do us good, after all our provocations. Truly, gentlemen, it is much from you that we must fetch our comfortable or sad prognostics of the life or death of this diseased land. Whatever you do, I know that it shall go well with the righteous; but for the happiness or misery of the nation, in general it is you that are our best prognostication. If you repent yourselves, and become a holy people to the Lord, it promiseth us deliverance; but if you harden your hearts, and prove despisers of God and holiness, it is like to be our temporal, and sure to be your eternal undoing, if saving grace do not prevent it.

And I must needs tell you that, if you be not brought to loathe yourselves, it is not because there is no loathsome matter in you. Did you see your inside, you could not forbear it. As I think it would somewhat abate the pride of the most curious gallants, if they did but see what a heap of phlegm, and filth, and dung, (and perhaps crawling worms,) there is within them; much more should it make you loathe yourselves if you saw those sins that are a thousand times more odious. And to instigate you hereunto, let me further reason with you.

1. You can easily loathe an enemy; and who hath been a greater enemy to any of you than yourselves? Another may injure you; but no man can everlastingly undo you, but yourselves.

2. You abhor him that kills your dearest friends; and it is you by your sins that have put to death the Lord of life.

3. Who is it but yourselves that have robbed you of so much precious time, and so much precious fruit of ordinances, and of all the mercies of the Lord?

4. Who is it but yourselves that hath brought you under God's displeasure? Poverty could not have made him loathe you, nor any thing besides your sins.

5. Who wounded conscience, and hath raised all your doubts and fears? Was it not your sinful selves?

6. Who is it but yourselves that hath brought you so near the gulf of misery, and endangered your eternal peace?

7. Consider the loathsome nature of your sins ; and how, then, can you choose but loathe yourselves ?

(1.) It is the creature's rebellion or disobedience against the Absolute Universal Sovereign.

(2.) It is the deformity of God's noblest creature here on earth, and the abusing of the most noble faculties.

(3.) It is a stain so deep that nothing can wash out but the blood of Christ. The flood that drowned a world of sinners did not wash away their sins. The fire that consumed the Sodomites did not consume their sins. Hell itself can never end it, and, therefore, shall have no end itself. It dieth not with you when you die : though churchyards are the guiltiest spots of ground, they do not bury and hide our sin.

(4.) The church must loathe it, and must cast out the sinner as loathsome, if he remain impenitent ; and none of the servants of the Lord must have any friendship with the unfruitful works of darkness.

(5.) God himself doth loathe the creature for sin, and for nothing else but sin. " My soul loathed them ;" (Zech. xi. 8.) " When the Lord saw it, he abhorred them, because of the provoking of his sons and daughters ;" (Deut. xxxii. 19.) " My soul shall abhor you ;" (Lev. xxvi. 30.) " When God heard this, he was wroth, and greatly abhorred Israel ;" (Psalm lxxviii. 59.) " He abhorred his very sanctuary ;" (Lam. ii. 7.) " For he is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity ;" Hab. i. 13. In a word, it is the sentence of God himself, that a " wicked man is loathsome and cometh to shame," (Prov. xiii. 5.) so that you see what abundant cause of self-abhorrence is among us.

But we are much afraid of God's departure, when we see how common self-love is in the world, and how rare this penitent self-loathing is.

1. Do they loathe themselves that on every occasion are contending for their honor, and exalting themselves, and venturing their very souls, to be highest in the world, for a little while ?

2. Do they loathe themselves that are readier to justify all their sins, or at least to extenuate them, than humbly confess them ?

3. Do they loathe themselves for all their sins that cannot endure to be reprov'd, but loathe their friends and the ministers of Christ that tell them of their loathsomeness ?

4. Do they loathe themselves that take their pride itself for manhood, and Christian humility for baseness, and brokenness of heart for whining hypocrisy or folly, and call them a company of priest-ridden fools that lament their sin, and ease their souls by free confession ? Is the ruffling bravery of this city, and the strange attire, the haughty carriage, the feasting, idleness, and pomp, the marks of such as loathe themselves for all their abominations ?

Why, then, was fasting, and sackcloth, and ashes, the badge of such in ancient times?

5. Do they loathe themselves for all their sins, who loathe those that will not do as they, and speak reproachfully of such as run not with them to the same excess of riot, (1 Peter iv. 4,) and count them precisians that dare not spit in the face of Christ, by willful sinning as venturously and madly as themselves?

6. Or, do they loathe themselves for all their sins, that love their sins even better than their God, and will not, by all the obtestations, and commands, and entreaties of the Lord, be persuaded to forsake them? How far all these are from this self-loathing, and how far that nation is from happiness, where the rulers or inhabitants are such, is easy to conjecture.

I should have minded you what sins of the land must be remembered, and loathed, if we would have peace and healing. But as the glass forbids me, so, alas! as the sins of Sodom, they declare themselves. Though, through the great mercy of the Lord, the body of this nation, and the sober part, have not been guilty of that covenant-breaking, perfidiousness, treason, sedition, disobedience, self-exalting, and turbulence, as some have been, and as ignorant foreigners, through the calumnies of malicious adversaries, may possibly believe; yet must it be for a lamentation through all generations, that any of those who went out from us have contracted the guilt of such abominations, and occasioned the enemies of the Lord to blaspheme; and that any, in the pride or simplicity of their hearts, have followed the conduct of Jesuitical seducers, they knew not whither or to what.

That profaneness aboundeth on the other side, and drunkenness, swearing, fornication, lasciviousness, idleness, pride, and covetousness, doth still survive the ministers that have wasted themselves against them, and the labors of faithful magistrates, to this day! And that the two extremes of heresy and profaneness do increase each other; and while they talk against each other, they harden one another, and both afflict the church of Christ. But especially woe to England for that crying sin, *the scorning of a holy life*, if a wonder of mercy do not save us. That people, professing the Christian religion, should scorn the diligent practice of that religion which themselves profess! That obedience to the God of heaven, that imitation of the example of our Savior, who came from heaven to teach us holiness, should not only be neglected, unreasonably and impiously neglected, but also by a transcendent impious madness should be made a matter of reproach! That the Holy Ghost, into whose name, as the Sanctifier, these men were themselves baptized, should not only be resisted, but his sanctifying work be made a scorn! That it should be made a matter of derision for a man to prefer his soul before his body, and heaven before earth, and

God before a transitory world, and to use his reason in that for which it was principally given him, and not to be willfully mad in a case where madness will undo him unto all eternity ! Judge, as you are men, whether hell itself is like much to exceed such horrid wickedness ! And whether it be not an astonishing wonder that ever a reasonable soul should be brought to such a height of abomination ! That they that profess to believe the holy catholic church, and the communion of saints, should deride the holiness of the church, and the saints, and their communion ! That they that pray for the hallowing of God's name, the coming of his kingdom, and the doing of his will, even as it is done in heaven, should make a mock at all this that they pray for ! How much further, think you, is it possible for wicked souls to go on sinning ? Is it not the God of heaven himself that they make a scorn of ? Is not holiness his image ? Did not he make the law that doth command it ; professing that none shall see his face without it ? Heb. xii. 14. O sinful nation ! O people laden with iniquity ! Repent, repent speedily, and with self-loathing ; repent of this inhuman crime, lest God should take away your glory, and enter himself into judgment with you, and plead against you the scorn that you have cast upon the Creator, the Savior, the Sanctifier, to whom you were engaged in your baptismal vows ! Lest, when he plagueth and condemneth you, he say, "Why persecuted you me ?" Acts ix. 4. "Inasmuch as ye did it to one of the least of these my brethren, ye did it unto me." Read Prov. i. 20. to the end. When Israel mocked the messengers of the Lord, and despised his words, and misused his prophets, his wrath arose against his people till there was no remedy ; (2 Chron. xxvi. 16.) and O that you, who are the physicians of this diseased land, would specially call them to repentance for this, and help them against it for the time to come !

Having called you first to remember your misdoings, and secondly to loathe yourselves in your own eyes for them, I must add a third, that you stop not here, but proceed to reformation, or else all the rest is but hypocrisy. And here it is that I most earnestly entreat this honorable assembly for their best assistance. O make not the forementioned sins your own, lest you hear from God, "*Quod minus crimine, quam absolutione peccatum est.*" Though England hath been used to cry loud for liberty, let them not have liberty to abuse their Maker, and to damn their souls, if you can hinder it. "*Optimus est reipublicæ status, ubi nulla libertas deest, nisi licentia pereundi,*" as Nero was once told by his unsuccessful tutor: Use not men to a liberty of scorning the laws of God, lest you teach them to scorn yours ; for can you expect to be better used than God ? And "*Cui plus licet quam par est, plus vult quam licet ;*" Gell. l. 17. c. 14. We have all seen the evils of liberty to be wanton in religion. Is it not worse to have

liberty to deride religion? If men shall have leave to go quietly to hell themselves, let them not have leave to mock poor souls from heaven. The suffering to the sound in faith is as nothing; for what is the foaming rage of madmen to be regarded? But that, in England, God should be so provoked, and souls so hindered from the paths of life, that whoever will be converted and saved must be made a laughing-stock, which carnal minds cannot endure; this is the mischief which we deprecate.

The eyes of the nation, and of the Christian world, are much upon you, some high in hopes, some deep in fears, some waiting in dubious expectations for the issue of your counsels. Great expectations, in deep necessities, should awake you to the greatest care and diligence. Though I would not, by omitting any necessary directions or admonitions to you, invite the world to think that I speak to such as cannot endure to hear, and that so honorable an assembly doth call the ministers of Christ to do those works of their proper office, which yet they will be offended if they do, yet had I rather err in the defective part than by excess, and therefore shall not presume to be too particular. Only in general, in the name of Christ, and on the behalf of a trembling, yet hoping nation, I most earnestly beseech and warn you, that you own and promote the power and practice of godliness in the land, and that as God, whose ministers you are, (Rom. xiii. 4.) is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him, (Heb. xi. 6.) and hath made this a principal article of our faith, so you would imitate your absolute Lord, and honor them that fear the Lord, and encourage them that diligently seek him. And may I not freely tell you that God should have the precedency? And that you must first seek his kingdom and the righteousness thereof, and he will facilitate all the rest of your work? Surely no powers on earth should be offended, that the God from whom, and for whom, and through whom, they have what they have, is preferred before them, when they should own no interest but his, and what is subservient to it. I have long thought that pretenses of a necessity of beginning with our own affairs, hath frustrated our hopes from many parliaments already; and I am sure that by delays, the enemies of our peace have got advantage to cross our ends, and attain their own. Our calamities began in differences about religion, and still that is the wound that most needs closing. And if that were done, how easily, I dare confidently speak it, would the generality of sober, godly people be agreed in things civil, and become the strength and glory of the sovereign under God! And though, with grief and shame, we see this work so long undone, (may we hope that God hath reserved it to this season,) yet I have the confidence to profess, that, as the exalting of one party, by the ejection and persecuting of the rest, is the sinful way to your dishonor and our ruin,

so the terms on which the differing parties most considerable among us may safely, easily, and suddenly unite, are very obvious, and our concord a very easy thing, if the prudent and moderate might be the guides, and selfish interests and passion did not set us at a further distance than our principles have done. And to show you the facility of such an agreement, were it not that such personal matters are much liable to misinterpretations, I should tell you, that the late reverend Primate of Ireland consented, in less than half an hour's debate, to five or six propositions which I offered him, as sufficient for the concord of the moderate Episcopal and Presbyterians, without forsaking the principles of their parties. O that the Lord would yet show so much mercy to a sinful nation, as to put it into your hearts to promote but the practice of those Christian principles which we are all agreed in! I hope there is no controversy among us whether God should be obeyed, and hell avoided, and heaven first sought, and Scripture be the rule and test of our religion, and sin abhorred and cast out. O that you would but further the practice of this with all your might! We crave not of you any lordship or dominion, nor riches, nor interest in your temporal affairs; we had rather see a law to exclude all ecclesiastics from all power of force. The God of heaven, that will judge you and us, will be a righteous judge betwixt us, whether we crave any thing unreasonable at your hands. These are the sum of our requests:—1. That holiness may be encouraged, and the overspreading profaneness of this nation effectually kept down. 2. That an able, diligent ministry may be encouraged, and not corrupted by temporal power. 3. That discipline may be seriously promoted, and ministers no more hindered by magistrates in the exercise of their office than physicians and schoolmasters are in theirs, seeing it is but a government like theirs, consisting in the liberty of conscionably managing the works of our own office, that we expect. Give us but leave to labor in Christ's vineyard with such encouragements as the necessity of obstinate souls requireth, and we will ask no more. You have less cause to restrain us from discipline than from preaching. For it is a more flesh-displeasing work that we are hardlier brought to. I foretell you that you shut out me, and all that are of my mind, if you would force us to administer sacraments, without discipline, and without the conduct of our own discretion, to whom the magistrate appoints it, as if a physician must give no physic but by your prescript. The anti-disciplinarian magistrate I could as resolutely suffer under as the superstitious, it being worse to cast out discipline than to err in the circumstances of it. The question is not, whether bishops or no, but whether discipline or none. And whether enough to use it. 4. We earnestly request that Scripture sufficiency, as the test of our religion and only universal law of Christ, may be maintained,

and that nothing unnecessary may be imposed as necessary, nor the church's unity laid on that which will not bear it, nor ever did. O that we might but have leave to serve God only as Christ hath commanded us, and to go to heaven in the same way as the apostles did! These are our desires; and whether they are reasonable, God will judge.

Give first to God the things that are God's, and then give to Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's. Let your wisdom be first pure, and then peaceable. Not but that we are resolved to be loyal to sovereignty, though you deny us all these. Whatever malicious men pretend, that is not, nor shall not, be our difference. I have proved more publicly, when it was more dangerous to publish it, that the generality of the orthodox, sober ministers, and godly people of this nation, did never consent to king-killing, and resisting sovereign power, nor the change of the ancient government of this land, but abhorred the pride and ambition that attempted it. I again repeat it, the blood of some, the imprisonment and displacing of others, the banishment or flight of others, and the detestations and public protestations of more; the oft-declared sense of England, and the wars and sad estate of Scotland, have all declared before the world, to the shame of calumniators, that the generality of the orthodox, sober Protestants of these nations, have been true to their allegiance, and detesters of unfaithfulness and ambition in subjects, and resisters of heresy and schism in the church, and of anarchy and democratical confusions in the commonwealth. And though the land hath rung with complaints and threatenings against myself, for publishing a little of the mixture of Jesuitical and Familistical contrivances, for taking down together our government and religion, and setting up new ones for the introduction of Popery, infidelity, and heresy, yet I am assured that there is much more of this confederacy for the all-seeing God to discover in time, to the shame of Papists, that cannot be content to write themselves for the killing of kings when the pope hath once excommunicated them, and by the decrees of a general council at the Lateran, to depose princes that will not extirpate such as the pope calls heretics, and absolve all their subjects from their fidelity and allegiance, but they must also creep into the councils and armies of Protestants, and, taking the advantage of successes and ambition, withdraw men at once from their religion and allegiance, that they may cheat the world into a belief that treasons are the fruits of the Protestant profession, when these masked jugglers have come by night, and sown and cherished these Romish tares. As a Papist must cease to be a Papist if he will be truly and fully loyal to his sovereign, (as I am ready to prove against any adversary,) so a Protestant must so far cease to be a Protestant, before he can be disloyal. For Rom. 13. is part of the rule of his religion. Unhappily there hath been a differ-

ence among us which is the higher power, when those that have their shares in the sovereignty are divided; but whether we should be subject to the higher power, is no question with us.

Gentlemen, I have nothing to ask of you for myself, nor any of my brethren, as for themselves, but that you will be friends to serious preaching and holy living, and will not ensnare our consciences with any unscriptural inventions of men. This I would beg of you as on my knees: 1. As for the sake of Christ, whose cause and people it is that I am pleading for. 2. For the sake of thousands of poor souls in this land, whose salvation or damnation will be much promoted by you. 3. For the sake of thousands of the dear servants of the Lord, whose eyes are waiting to see what God will do by your hands. 4. For your own sakes, who are undone if you dash yourselves on the rock you should build on, and set against the holy God, and turn the cries of his servants to heaven for deliverance from you; Luke xviii. 8. If you stumble on Christ, he will break you in pieces; but if he fall upon you, he will grind you to powder. 5. For the sake of your posterity, that they may not be bred up in ignorance or ungodliness. 6. For the honor of the nation and yourselves, that you turn by all the suspicions and fears that are raised in the land. 7. For the honor of sound doctrine and church-government, that you may not bring schism into greater credit than now you have brought it to deserve shame. For if you frown on godliness under pretense of uniformity in unnecessary things, and make times worse than when libertinism and schism so prevailed, the people will look back with groans and say, 'What happy times did we once see!' And so will honor schism, and libertinism, and usurpation, through your oppression. 8. Lastly, I beg this of you, for the honor of sovereignty, and the nation's peace. A prince of a holy people is most honorable. The interest of holiness is Christ's own. Happy is that prince that espouseth this, and subjecteth all his own unto it. See Psalm i. 1, 2. and ci. and xv. 4. It is the conscionable, prudent, godly people of the land, that must be the glory and strength of their lawful sovereign. Their prayers will serve him better than the hideous oaths and curses of the profane. Woe to the rulers that set themselves against the interest of Christ and holiness! (read Psalm ii.) or that make snares for their consciences, that they may persecute them as disobedients, who are desirous to obey their rulers in subordination to the Lord. See Dan. iii. and vi. 5. 10. 13. I have dealt plainly with you, and told you the very truth. If God have now a blessing for you and us, you will obey it; but if you refuse, then look to yourselves, and answer it if you can. I am sure, in spite of earth and hell, it shall go well with them that live by faith.

RIGHT REJOICING:

OR,

THE NATURE AND ORDER

OF

RATIONAL AND WARRANTABLE JOY;

DISCOVERED IN A

SERMON PREACHED AT ST. PAUL'S

BEFORE THE

LORD MAYOR AND ALDERMEN,

AND THE SEVERAL COMPANIES OF THE CITY OF LONDON,

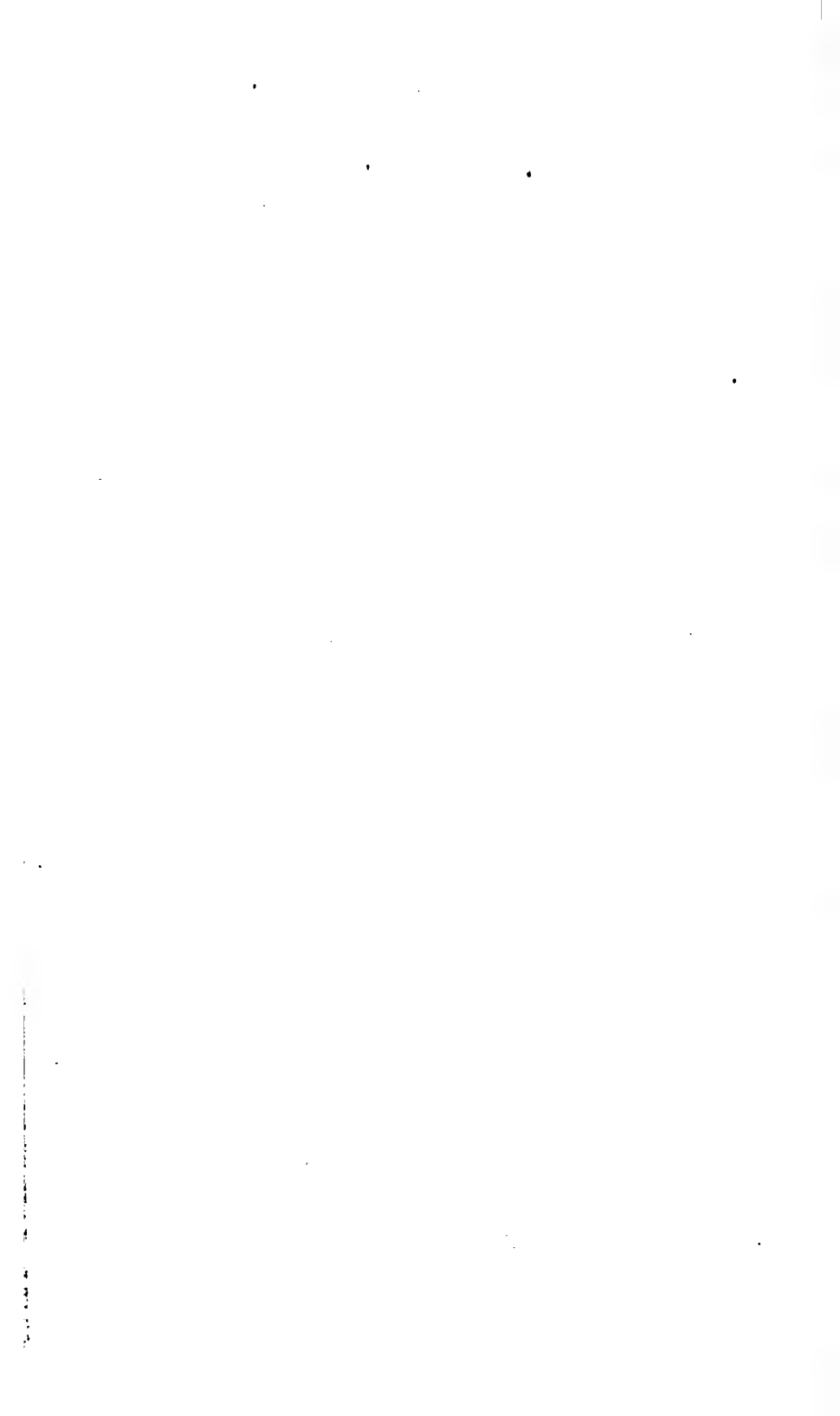
On May 10th, 1660,

**APPOINTED BY BOTH HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT TO BE A DAY OF SOLEMN THANKSGIVING
FOR GOD'S RAISING UP AND SUCCEEDING HIS EXCELLENCY,
AND OTHER INSTRUMENTS,**

IN ORDER TO

HIS MAJESTY'S RESTORATION,

AND THE SETTLEMENT OF THESE NATIONS.



TO THE

RIGHT HONORABLE THOMAS ALLEYNE,

LORD MAYOR OF THE CITY OF LONDON,

WITH THE

RIGHT WORSHIPFUL ALDERMEN,

HIS BRETHREN.

As, in obedience to your favorable invitation, this Sermon was first preached; and the Author, conscious of his great unworthiness, employed in so honorable a work; so it is your pleasure, against which my judgment must not here contest, that hath thus exposed it to the public view; which yet I must confess doth not engage you in the patronage of any of the crudities and imperfections of this hasty work, it being the matter, which is of God, that so far prevailed for your acceptance as to procure your pardon of the manner, which is too much my own. Rejoicing is so highly valued, even by nature, that I thought it a matter of great necessity to help to rectify and elevate your joys. The corruption of a thing so excellent must needs be very bad; and it being the great and durable good that must feed all great and durable joy; and seeing these little transitory things can cause but little and transitory delight, I thought it my duty to insist most on the greatest, on which, in your meditations, you must most insist; which I repent not of, especially now you have given my doctrine a more loud and lasting voice, because it is only our heavenly interest that may be the matter of universal, continued delight; and so the subject may make the sermon to be of the more universal and continued use, when a subject of less excellency and duration than heaven would have depressed and limited the discourse, as to its usefulness. And also I was forced in this, as in all these sublunary things, to estimate the mercy in which we did all so solemnly rejoice but as a means, which is so far to be valued as it conduceth to its end; and is something or nothing as it relateth to eternity. Since I placed my hopes above, and learned to live a life of faith, I never desire to know any mercy in any other form or name, nor value it

on any other account, as not affecting to make such reckonings which I daily see obliterated in grief and shame by those that make them; and remembering who said, that if we had known Christ himself after the flesh, henceforth we know him so no more. As it was my compassion to the frantic, merry world, and also to the self-troubling melancholy Christian, and my desire methodically to help you in your rejoicings about the great occasions of the day, which formed this exhortation to what you heard, and chose the subject, which, to some, might seem less suitable to the day; so, if the publication may print so great and necessary a point on the hearts of any that had not the opportunity to hear, as God shall have the praise, and they the joy, so you shall have, under God, the thanks, and I the attainment of my end, which is my reward. I rest,

Your servant in the work of Christ,

RICHARD BAXTER.

RIGHT REJOICING

LUKE x. 26.

NOTWITHSTANDING, IN THIS REJOICE NOT, THAT THE SPIRITS ARE SUBJECT TO YOU; BUT RATHER REJOICE BECAUSE YOUR NAMES ARE WRITTEN IN HEAVEN.

RIGHT HONORABLE, WORSHIPFUL, AND BELOVED AUDITORS,

IF any of you shall say, upon the hearing of my text, that I have chosen a subject unsuitable to the occasion, and that a "rejoice not" is out of season on a day of such rejoicing, they may, I hope, be well satisfied by that time they have considered the reason of these words, as used by Christ to his disciples, and the greater joy that is here commanded, and so the reason of my choice.

When Christ had sent forth his seventy disciples to preach the gospel through the cities of Judea, and to confirm it by miraculous cures, for which he endued them with power from above, upon their return they triumph especially in this, that "the devils themselves were subject to them through the name of Christ;" ver. 17. A mercy which Christ is so far from extenuating, that, 1. He sets it forth more fully than they, (ver. 18.) "I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven." 2. He promised them yet more of it, "giving them power to tread on serpents, and on scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy, and that nothing should by any means hurt them." 3. He rejoiceth in spirit, and thankfully acknowledged it to the Father himself; ver. 21. And yet he seems here to forbid them to rejoice in it, commanding them another joy. What! was it not a mercy to be rejoiced in? or is there any contradiction in the words of Christ? Neither: he doth not absolutely forbid them to rejoice in it; but he saw that their corruption took an advantage by it, to puff them up with pride and vain-glory, and that they savored it too carnally, and were much taken with it, as it was a visible triumph and honor to themselves, the instruments, and too much overlooked the end and use of it. Christ therefore aggravateth the mercy in its proper notion, as it was to the honoring of the Father and himself, and the advancement of his kingdom, and the saving of men's souls, by the confirmation of the gospel, and the fall of Satan.

But the shell or grosser substance of the mercy applied to a wrong end, and by corruption made another thing, being deprived of its proper soul, this Christ admonisheth them to keep out of their estimation and affection. He meeteth his returning messengers rejoicing too much in themselves ; and this proud, inordinate, selfish joy is it that he would take from them by his caution or prohibition. "In this rejoice not." But that they may see that he doth not envy them their comforts, he showeth them cause of a greater joy, which he alloweth and commandeth them, as more suitable to his ends and their felicity : "But rather rejoice that your names are written in heaven."

For better understanding of this, you may observe, I. What matter of joy the subjection of the devils might afford them. II. What manner of joy they were affected with, which Christ forbade them. III. What manner of joy it is that Christ alloweth them, when he seemeth to restrain it wholly to their heavenly interest.

I. No doubt, to have the devils subject to them was a great mercy, in which they might rejoice. For, 1. It was the gift of Christ ; and all is perfumed that hath touched his hand. Nothing but good can come from him that is so good, by way of gift.

2. It was a gift foretold by the prophets, as reserved for the gospel time, that is eminently called the kingdom of God ; and an extraordinary gift in respect to the precedent and subsequent generations. It was no usual thing for men to exercise such authority over the very devils, as to command them to come forth, and to heal the bodies that they had long afflicted.

3. It was a victory over the strongest enemy, that can make more effectual resistance than the most numerous armies of poor mortals, and would laugh at your horse and arms, your fire and sword, your greatest cannons ; and cannot be expunged but by the power of the Almighty. A stronger than he must come upon him, and bind him, and cast him out of his possession, before he will surrender the garrison, goods, and prisoners, which he hath held in peace ; Luke xi. 21, 22.

4. It was a victory over the most subtle enemy, that is not conquerable by any stratagems of human wit.

5. It was a victory over the most malicious enemy, that sought more than the subversion of men's temporal peace, and by afflicting the body intended the hurting of the soul.

6. It was a conquest of him that had long possession, and one way or other kept in bondage the prisoners that justice had subjected to his rage.

7. It was a victory exceeding honorable to Christ, whose very messengers, by his name alone, could make the powers of hell submit. He that refused to be made a king, as having not a king-

den of this world, (John xviii. 36.) and that had not a place to lay his head on, (Matt. viii. 20.) commanded him that had presumed to tempt him with all the kingdoms and the glory of the world! (Matt. iv. 8, 9.) and that not only by the bare word of his mouth, but by the word of his meanest, most despised messengers; which made the people stand amazed, saying, What manner of man is this?

8. It was a victory tending to the successes of the gospel, to convince the unbelieving world, and so to enlarge the kingdom of Christ, and to save the people's souls.

9. And also from so great a work it was no small honor that accrued to the instruments; an honor which, in its proper place, they might lawfully regard.

10. And all this was aggravated by the congruency of the mercy to the low, despised condition of the instruments, (and of Christ himself,) when they were destitute of all common advantages and means for the carrying on of so great and necessary a work, surpassing all the strength of flesh: how seasonable was it that the omnipotency of Heaven should then appear for them, and thus engage itself for their success! So that in all this you may easily see that here was abundant matter for a rational, warrantable joy to the disciples.

11. But where, then, was their fault? And what was that joy which Christ forbade them? *Answer.* Having already told you in general, I shall tell you more particularly. 1. They looked too much at the matter of dominion over the subjected and ejected devils, and relished most delightfully the external part. As the Jews looked for a Messiah that should come in grandeur, and bring the nations under his dominion, so the disciples, that had yet too much of these conceits, began to be lifted up with the expectation of some earthly glory, when they saw the powers of hell submit, and Christ thus begin with the manifestation of his omnipotency. But the great end of these miracles they too much overlooked: they too much left out of their rejoicings the appearances of God, the advantages of faith, the promotion of the spiritual kingdom of Christ, and the greater mercies of the gospel, as to themselves and others.

2. They took too great a share of honor to themselves, being more affected to see what great things they were made the instruments to accomplish, than what honor did thereby accrue to God and benefit to man; and thus, while they arrogate too much to themselves, and withal too much overlook those higher, greater mercies, to which all their miracles were but means, they deservedly fall under Christ's reproof; and he is employed in the cure of their diseased joys, by amputation of the superfluities, and re-

tifying the irregularities, and supplying the defects, lest Satan should take possession of their souls, by carnality, selfishness, and pride, when they thought they had conquered him, by dispossessing him of men's bodies.

III. By this you may understand what joy it is that Christ alloweth and commandeth them.

1. As to themselves, to kill their pride, and to increase their kindly joy and thankfulness, and to advance their estimation of the riches of the gospel, and rectify their judgment of the work and kingdom of their Lord, he calls them to mind that higher mercy, which is worthy of their greatest joy. An interest in heaven is another kind of mercy than healing the sick, or casting out devils here on earth.

2. In reference to his honor, he would have them first look at the greatest of his gifts, and not forget the glory which he finally intends them, while they are taken up with these wonders in the way; for his greatest honor ariseth from his greatest mercies.

3. As to the degrees of their rejoicing, he would not have them give the greater share to the lesser mercy, but to rejoice so much more in their heavenly interest, as that all other joy should be as none in comparison of it; so that this "Rejoice not in this," &c. is as much as if he had said, 'Let your rejoicing in this power over the devils be as nothing in comparison of your rejoicing that your names are written in heaven.' Just as he forbiddeth care and labor for these earthly things, when he saith, "Care not what ye shall eat," &c. (Matt. vi. 25.) "Labor not for the meat that perisheth, but for that which endureth to everlasting life, which the Son of man will give you;" John vi. 27. Our care and labor for earthly things must be nothing, in comparison of the care and labor we are at for heaven; and so our joy, in the greatest of these outward mercies, should be as nothing, in comparison of our joy in higher things.

4. As to the nature and order of the thing, he alloweth them no joy in this, or any temporal or created thing whatsoever, but as it proceedeth from God, and tendeth to him as our ultimate end. We must not rejoice in our victories over Satan, or any other enemy, for itself, and as our end, but as it is a means to the glory of God and men's salvation. In all which, it is evident that Christ doth but regulate and advance their joy, and calleth them first to rejoice in that which is their end and all, and animateth all their lower mercies: he then alloweth and requireth them to rejoice, even in this, which he seemed to forbid them to rejoice in, viz. that the devils were subject to them, so they do it in due subordination to its end.

The only difficulty in the preceptive part of the text is, what is

meant here by the "writing of their names in heaven." In a word, the meaning is, that they are "fellow citizens of the saints, and of the household of God;" and, having a room among the saints on earth, have a title to the celestial glory. As, in some well-ordered cities, there were rolls kept of the names of all the citizens, or freemen, as distinct from all the inferior, more servile sort of subjects; and as muster-rolls are kept of the listed soldiers of the army, so all that are saints are enrolled citizens of heaven; that is, are the heirs of the heavenly felicity.

We are decreed to this state before the foundations of the world; we are redeemed to it by the death of Christ; but we are not actually entered into it till we are sanctified by the Holy Ghost, and heartily engaged to God the Father, Son, and Spirit, in the holy covenant.

The doctrine of the text is contained in this proposition—To have our names written in heaven, is the greatest mercy, and first, and chiefly, and only for itself to be rejoiced in; which so puts the estimate on all inferior mercies that, further than they refer to this, they are not to be the matter of our joy.

Though we had seen the devils subjected to our ministration, departing from the possessed, when we command them in the name of Christ, and the bodies of the afflicted miraculously relieved, yet all this were not, comparatively to be rejoiced in, nor as separated from our title to the heavenly glory.

When I have, first, given you the reasons of the prohibition—"Rejoice not in this;" and then of the command—"But rather rejoice," &c., you may, by fuller satisfaction about the sense and truth of the proposition, be better prepared for the further application.

1. "Rejoice not," though the devils themselves were subject to you, further than as this refers to heaven; 1. Because all these common mercies may possibly consist with the present misery of the persons that receive them. A man may be the slave of the devil, as to his soul, when he is casting him out of another man's body. He may be conquered by his own concupiscence, that hath triumphed over many an enemy. These times have showed it, to our grief, that heresy, and pride, and ambition, and self-conceit, may conquer those that have been famous for their conquests. He may be a slave to himself that is the master of another.

And what I say of the instance in my text, you may, upon a parity or superiority of reason, all along give me leave to apply to the great occasion of the day; it being a matter of much greater glory to conquer infernal powers than mortal enemies, and to have the devils subject to us than men. To be such a conqueror of men, or devils, is no sure proof of the pardon of sin, the favor of

God, and saving of your souls. Alas ! how many, called valiant, are the basest cowards in the warfare that their everlasting life dependeth on ! How many, that are renowned for their victories by men, are wretches, despised and abhorred by the Lord ! What Christian so poor and despicable in the world that would change his state with a Catiline or Sejanus, yea, with a Caesar or Alexander, if he might ! Could you see the inside of a glittering gallant, or an adored prince, that is a stranger to the life of faith, what a sad disparity would you see ! The vermin of the most filthy lusts continually crawling in the soul, while the body is set out by the most exquisite ornaments that pride can invent, and their purses can procure, for the increasing of their esteem in the eyes of such as judge of souls by the color and cover of the bodies. To see the same man sumptuously feasted, attended, honored, magnified by men, and at the same time dead in sin, unacquainted with the life and comforts of believers, and under the curse and condemnation of the law of God, would tell you that such a wretch is far from the state in which a reasonable man is allowed to rejoice. There are not more naked, leprous souls in the world, than some that are covered with a silken, laced, painted case ; nor any more poor and sordid than such as abound with earthly riches. And for such a one to rejoice is as unseemly as for a man to glory that his gangrened foot hath a handsome shoe ; or that his diseased, pained flesh doth suffer in the fashion ; or that his wounds and ulcers are searched with a silver instrument. God seeth the rottenness and filth that is within these painted sepulchres, and therefore judgeth not of them as the ignorant spectator, that seeth no farther than the smoothed, polished, gilded outside. And, therefore, we find his language of such to differ so much from the language of the world. He calls those poor, and miserable, and blind, and naked, and foolish, and mad, and dead, and cursed, that, perhaps, hear nothing lower from the world than honorable, worshipful, rich, and wise ; and men are admiring them, while God is leathing them ; and men are applauding them while God condemneth them. And hence it is that the servants of the Lord do lament the case of those that worldlings count most happy. What Paul speaks of those " whose God is their belly, whose glory is their shame, and who mind earthly things," he doth it weeping ; (Phil. iii. 18, 19.) when a frantic sensualist would have derided his compassionate tears, and bid him keep them for himself.

2. Rejoice not in these outward, common things, comparatively, or for themselves, because they are not only consistent with next deplorable misery, but also are the strong and ordinary means of making men miserable, and fixing them in it, and increasing it.

Many that have seemed humble, fruitful, flourishing, and steadfast, while they dwelt in the valleys of a mean, a low, afflicted state, have proved sun-burnt, weather-beaten sinners, apostates, proud, vain-glorious and barren, when they have removed their habitations to the mountains of prosperity. Alas! we find it hard enough to be serious, faithful Christians, under the less and ordinary temptations of a poor, or mean, or suffering condition. And I should rejoice if I were but to pass to heaven as a camel must pass through a needle's eye. We have difficulties enough already, unless our wisdom, strength, and courage, were greater to encounter them; and shall we rejoice if these difficulties be increased to impossibilities, (as with men,) leaving us no hope but that human impossibilities are conquerable by Divine Omnipotency? Luke xviii. 27. Is it not hard enough to have a lowly mind in a low condition; but much more in a high? To despise the world when the world despiseth us? To walk in heaven when faith is not interrupted by the noise or shows of the distracted actors of these bedlam tragedies? And to converse with our everlasting company when we are freest from these crowds and tumults? And shall we rejoice that we, who already stumble at straw, have rocks of offense and mountains of difficulty cast before us? How few are advanced to higher measures of faith and holiness by their advancements in the world! For the most part, if they seemed to have something of plain honesty and fidelity before, when they come to be advanced, it is drowned in carnal policies, self-love, and hypocritical dissimulation. And if they seemed before to be humble and heavenly, and to live to God, and to his interest and service, how strangely doth prosperity and dignity transform them, and make them forget their former apprehensions, their convictions, purposes, and vows, yea, their God, their happiness, and themselves. And should we not be very cautelous how we rejoice in an air that few men have their health in? and in a diet, how sweet soever, that corrupts and kills the most that use it? in the tables that prove snares, and the sumptuous houses that are traps to the inhabitants?

3. Rejoice not in these common things, for they are but such as are often made the devil's tools to do his work by, and are used against the Lord that gave them, to the hindrance of the gospel, and injury of the church of Christ. While men are low, and live by faith, they do good with the little which they have; and have the blessing of the will, (when they are unable for the deed,) and of hearts disposed to do good, if they had opportunity; when, usually, those that are lifted up, having more of power, and less of will, do less when they might and should do more; and use their talents to aggravate their sin and condemnation: to further piety, or charity, they have power without will; but to hinder it, they

have both power and will. And while the poor of the world, that are rich only in faith, would help on the work of God, and cannot, (by the great assistances which the great might give,) and the rich and honorable can, and will not, but can and will promote the interest of the flesh, you may easily see the case of the church, how sure it is to know adversity, and how much of our expectation must be from God, and how little from any of the sons of men. Is it as common for one that is very rich to part with all to follow Christ for the hopes of heaven, as it is for one that hath not much in the world to part with? Is it as common for one that hath many thousands a year, to cast all his substance into the treasury, as for a widow to do it that hath but two mites? Luke xxi. 2. 4. O, how much easier were it like to go with the church of God, if greatness and ungodliness were not so commonly conjunct! But, usually, as riches, and dignities, and honors, do much increase their carnal interest, so do they increase their carnal-mindedness, and their engagements against that life of faith and holiness, which is contrary to their interests; so that none are such malignant adversaries to godliness, and none have such advantage to execute their malice. Seeing, then, that all such honors and advancements are made, by corruption, too ordinary instruments of the vilest works of serving Satan, and opposing Christ, and oppressing piety, honesty, and innocence, rejoice not in them, as for themselves, nor any way but in subservience to your heavenly rejoicings.

4. And it should much abate our carnal joy to consider that all these things are such as may end in misery, and leave the owner in everlasting woe. He that is feasting in purple and fine linen to-day, may be to-morrow in remediless torments, and want a drop of water to cool his tongue; Luke xvi. He that is to-day triumphing over mortal enemies, may to-morrow be led in triumph to hell-fire, and lie in chains of darkness till the judgment of the great day. He that is now prophesying in the name of Christ, and casting out devils, and doing many great and wonderful works, may shortly be condemned at his bar, with a "Depart from me, ye workers of iniquity; I never knew you;" Matt. vii. 22, 23. And who would be merry at a feast that he must cast up again, in griping pain, or mortal sickness? You see now where the great ones of the world do take their places, and how they are admired and honored by men; but you see not where the tide will leave them, and how they shall be used by infernal spirits, if they had not a better preventive and security than all the renown and dignities of the world. Be cautelous, therefore, in your rejoicing for that which may end in everlasting sorrows.

Yea, more than so; these outward honors and successes may plunge men deeper in perdition than ever they had been without

them. And thousands shall wish that they had never known them; and that they had rather been the lowest and obscurest persons, than, by the temptations of prosperity, to have been led into that misery. And should you not be very cautelous in your rejoicing in that which you may possibly wish you had never known? You see then the reasons for the prohibition, "Rejoice not."

II. But, on the contrary, that the precept "Rejoice that your names are written in heaven," is backed with such reasons from the nature of the thing, as should much excite us to the practice, is a truth so manifest, that a tedious demonstration of it might seem at best unnecessary, and so an error, in these straits of time. 1. What should be rejoiced in, if not the Lord of life himself, who is the everlasting joy and glory of the saints? If felicity itself cannot make us happy, and life itself is insufficient to quicken us, and the sun itself cannot illuminate us, it is in vain to expect this light, this life, this happiness and joy from any other. From others we may have joy derivatively at the second hand, but only from God as the original and first cause. Other things may be means of the conveyance, but God is the matter of our joy. A creature may be his medicine, but he is our life and health itself. Comfort may be offered by others, but it is he that gives it. Others may direct us to it, but he effecteth it. If God be not to be rejoiced in, the affection of joy is made in vain; for he is goodness itself, and there is nothing lovely or delectable but what is in him. And what is heaven but the fruition of God?

2. It is congruous that we now rejoice in that which we must everlastingly rejoice in. Heaven is the state of everlasting joy, and therefore the foresight of it by faith is the only way to rational, solid comfort here: If you knew the place in which you should live but an hundred years in earthly pleasures, or the friend in whom you should as long have sweet delight, the foreknowledge of it would make that place and friend more delightful to you than any other. Mutable joys are the shame of man, and show his levity or folly in choosing these things to comfort him that are insufficient to perform it. But if your heavenly interest be the matter of your joy, you may rejoice to-morrow as well as to-day, and the next day as well as to-morrow, and the next year as well as this. If prosperity be your joy, your joy must be short, for your worldly prosperity will be so. If victory and dignity, and overtopping others, be your joy, it will be short; for death is ready to leave the conqueror, the honorable, the prince, with the conquered and the meanest subject. If the solemnity and feasting of such a day as this should be the greatest matter of your joy, the day will have a night, and the feast an end, and so will your

joy. But if heaven be the matter of your joy, you may go on in your rejoicing, and every day may be your festival; for God is the same both yesterday, and to-day, and forever. You only have the day that hath no night, and the feast that hath no end, or intermission, unless as it is caused by your errors and misapprehensions. There can nothing fall out of so hurtful a nature as to turn your feast into gall and wormwood; for God will be still God, and Christ still your Head, and heaven will be heaven; and nothing is of any considerable moment to put into the scales against your happiness. If once you have a God, a Christ, a heaven to rejoice in, you may rationally indulge a constant joy, and may rationally rejoice in poverty, reproach, contempt, and calumny, in imprisonment, banishment, sickness, or in death, as a prosperous state; and you transgress the laws of reason if you do not.

- 3. Rejoice if your names are written in heaven; for this is a divine, a pure, a profitable, and a warrantable joy. When God and his ministers rebuke your mirth, it is not this holy mirth that they rebuke, but your dreaming mirth, or waking folly. As we beat down your presumption, but to set up your faith; and beat down men's deceitful hopes, to prepare them for the hopes that will not fail them, and not to bring them to despair, so do we call you from your frothy, foolish, childish mirth, that we may lead you to the highest joys. Here is joy that you need not be ashamed of; of which you can scarcely take too much; of which you need not to repent. Be as joyful and merry as you will, if this may but be the matter of your joy. The more you are thus joyful, the more acceptable to God. It is Satan, and not God, that is the enemy of this joy; that pleads against it, and fills a Christian's mind with groundless scruples, and doubts, and objections against it. O that our souls and our assemblies did more abound with this holy joy! And O that Christians understood the excellency and usefulness of it, and would set themselves more constantly to the promoting and maintaining of it in themselves! Whoever of you that is most joyful in the Lord, I dare persuade you to be more joyful yet; and so far should you be from checking yourselves for this holy joy, that the rest of your duties should intend it, and you should make it your work by the help of all God's ordinances and mercies to increase it. He is the best Christian that hath most love, and joy, and gratitude; and he that is best at this, is like to be best in the performance of his other duties, and in the conquest of remaining sins. But more of this in the application.

And now I am approaching to a closer application, I hope I may suppose that I have removed the objection that met me in the beginning, and that by this time you see that I am not unreasonably suppressing your warrantable joy; but, 1. Preventing

that which is unwarrantable; and, 2. Showing you the higher joys, which must animate these, or they will be but dead, corrupted things. It is only the regulation and the exaltation of your joys that I am endeavoring; and, for the first, my text affordeth me so full instruction, that you may see this observation meeting you in the first perusal of the words.

That when the Lord hath vouchsafed us matter of rejoicing in his wonders of mercy, and our great successes, the best of us are too prone to take up a selfish, carnal joy, and have need of Christ's prohibition or caution, "Rejoice not in this."

The soul is active, and will be doing; and there is nothing that it is more naturally inclined to than delight. Something or other, which may be suitable to it, and sufficient to answer its desires, it fain would be rejoicing in. And the spiritual part of all our mercies is pure and refined, and too subtle for the discerning of our carnal minds, and, therefore, is invisible to the dark, ungodly world; and, also, it is contrary to the interest of the flesh, and to the present bent of man's concupiscence; and therefore it is that spiritual mercies are not perceived, nor relished by the flesh; yea, that they are refused, as food, by a sick stomach, with enmity and loathing, as if they were judgments or plagues, and not mercies; and hence it is that a carnal mind doth as unwillingly accept of any mercies of this sort, as if it were some heavy service that made God almost beholden to him to accept them. But the objects of sense, the matters of commodity, or honor, or sensual pleasure, are such as the worst of men are more eager after than any other: they are things that flesh itself doth savor, and can judge of, and is naturally, now, too much in love with. And, therefore, there being too much of this concupiscence yet within us, the best have need, as to be excited to the spiritual part of their rejoicing, so to be warned and called off from the carnal part. Our successes, and our other common mercies, have all of them both a carnal and a spiritual part; somewhat that is suited to our bodies, and somewhat to our souls. And as we are all too prone to be sensible and regardful of our bodily affairs and interests, and too insensible and neglectful of the matters of our souls, so we can easily pick out so much of providences and mercies as gratify and accommodate our flesh; and there we would stop and know no more; as if we had no spiritual part to mind, nor the mercy of any spiritual part to be improved. To rejoice in mere prosperity and success may be done without grace, by pride, and sensuality, as easily as a drunkard can be merry with his cups, or any other sinner in his sin. Think it not needless, then, to hear this admonition, Take heed that you rejoice not carnally in the carcass, or outide only of your mercies. As such an outside religion,

consisting in the shell of duty, without God, who is the life and kernel, is not religion indeed, but an hypocritical, self-deceiving show; so you may turn a day of thanksgiving into a day of fleshly mirth, more sinful than a morris-dance or may-game, because of the aggravation of conjunct hypocrisy, if you set not a faithful guard upon your hearts.

For the rectifying, therefore, and elevating of your joys, I am first to tell you, that there is matter of far greater joy before you than all the successes or prosperity of the world; and if it be not, yet being freely offered you, your acceptance may quickly make it such. Eternal joy and glory is at hand; the door is open, the promise is sure, the way made plain, the helps are many, and safe, and powerful; you may have the conduct of Christ, and the company of thousands, (though the smaller number,) if you will go this way; there are passengers every day going on, and entering in; many that were here the last year, are this year in heaven; yea, many that were yesterday on earth, are in heaven to-day. It is another kind of assembly and solemnity than this that they are now beholding, and you may behold. One strain of that celestial melody doth afford more ravishing sweetness and delight than all that ever earth could yield. If a day in God's courts here be better than a thousand in common employments or delights, then, sure, a day in heaven is better than ten thousand. That is the court; and (except the church, which is a garden that hath some celestial plants, and is a seminary or nursery for heaven) this world is the dunghill. There all is spiritual, pure, and perfect; the soul, the service, and the joy; but here they are all so mixed with flesh, and, therefore, so imperfect and impure, that we are afraid of our very comforts, and are fain, upon the review, to sorrow over many of our joys. We come now, from cares and troubles, to our feasts; and our wedding garments smell of the smoke; and a secret disquietness in the midst of our delights doth tell us, that the root of our troubles doth remain, and that yet we are not where we should be, and that this is not our resting place. We lay by our cares and sorrows on these days, with our old clothes, to take them up again to-morrow; and, alas! they are our ordinary week-day habits: and it were well if it were only so; but even in laughter the heart is sorrowful; and in our sweetest joys we feel such imperfections as threateneth a relapse into our former troubles. But the face of God admitteth no such imperfections in the joy of the beholders: there we shall have joy without either feeling or fear of sorrow, and praises without any mixtures of complaint. Our sweetest love to the Lord of love will feel no bounds, and fear no end. O, what unspeakable delights will fill that soul that now walks mournfully, and feedeth upon

complaints and tears! How the glory of God will make that face to shine forever, that now looks too dejectedly, and is darkened with griefs, and worn with fears, and daily wears a mourning visage! No trouble can enter into the heavenly Jerusalem; nor is there a mournful countenance in the presence of our King. Self-troubling was the fruit of sin and weakness, of ignorance, mistakes, and passion, and, therefore, is unknown in heaven, being pardoned and laid by with our flesh among the rest of our childish weaknesses and diseases. That poor, afflicted, wounded soul, that breathes in trouble as its daily air, and thinks it is made up of grief and fear, shall be turned into love and joy, and be unspeakably higher in those heavenly delights than ever it was low in sorrow. O blessed face of the most glorious God! O happy presence of our glorified head! O blessed beams of the eternal love, that will continually shine upon us! O blessed work! to behold, to love, to delight, and praise! O blessed company of holy angels, and perfect saints, so perfectly united, so exactly suited, to concord in those felicitating works! Where all these are what sorrow can there be? what relics of distress, or smallest scars of our ancient wounds? Had I but one such friend as the meanest angel in heaven to converse with, how easily could I spare the courts of princes, the popular concourse, the learned academies, and all that the world accounteth pleasure, to live in the sweet and secret converse of such a friend! How delightfully should I hear him discourse of the ravishing love of God, of the glory of his face, the person of our Redeemer, the continued union of the glorified human nature with the divine, and of the Head, with all the glorified members, and his influences on his imperfect ones below; of the dignity, quality, and work of saints and angels, and of the manner of their mutual converse! How gladly would I retire from the noise of laughter, the compliments of comic gallants, the clutter and vain-glory of a distracted world, or any of the more manly inferior delights, to walk with one such heavenly companion! O how the beams of his illuminated intellect would promote my desired illumination! and the flames of his love to the most glorious God would reach my heart! What life and heavenly sweetness there would be in all his speeches! That little of heaven that I have perceived on some of the servants of the Lord, that are conversant above in the life of faith, doth make them more amiable, and their converse much more delectable to me, than all the feastings, music, or merriments in the world. O, then, what a world of joy and glory will that be, where we shall not only converse with them that have seen the Lord, and are perfected in the beatifical vision and fruition, but also shall ourselves everlastingly behold him, and enjoy him in perfection!

That world all true believers see. they see it by faith in the holy glass which the Spirit in the apostles and prophets hath set up; and they have the earnest and first-fruits of it in themselves, even that Spirit by which they are sealed hereunto. That world we are ready to take possession of; we are almost there; we are but taking our leave of the inhabitants and affairs of earth, and better putting on our heavenly robes, and we are presently there. A few nights more to stay on earth, a few words more to speak to the sons of men, a few more duties to perform, and a few more troublesome steps to pass, will be a small, inconsiderable delay. This room will hold you now but an hour longer, and this world but a few hours more; but heaven will be the dwelling-place of saints to all eternity. These faces of flesh that we see to-day we shall see but a few times more, if any; but the face of God we shall see forever. That glory no dismal times shall darken; that joy no sorrow shall interrupt, no sin shall forfeit, no enemy shall endanger or take from us, no changes shall ever dispossess us of. And should not a believer, then, rejoice that his name is written in heaven? and that every providence wheels him on, and, whether the way be fair or foul, it is thither that he is travelling? O sirs! if heaven be better than vanity and vexation; if endless joy be better than the laughter of a child that ends in crying; and if God be better than a delusory world,—you have then greater matters set before you to be the matter of your joy than prosperity and success, or any thing that flesh and blood delights in.

And this being so, I am next, in faithfulness to your souls, obliged to call you to inquire, whether the rejoicing of this day, and the rejoicing of your lives, do here begin? Is God the beginning and the end of all? O that the Lord would awaken you to perceive, in all your mirth, how nearly it concerneth you to know first whether your names are written in heaven, and whether your chiefest joy be fetched from thence.

Alas! sirs, it is a most pitiful sight to see men frisk about in jollity, with the marks of death and wrath upon them; and to see men so frantically merry in their sin, as to forget the misery that will so quickly mar their mirth; and to see men live as quietly and pleasantly as if all were well with them, when they have taken no successful care for their precious souls, nor made any considerable sure provision for their endless life. Poor sinner! the Lord, who sent me on this message to thee, knows that I envy thee not thy mirth or pleasure, but only would have it better for thee, or have thee set thy mind on better. But let me so far interrupt thee in thy mirth as to ask thee whether thou art sure of heaven; or, at least, whether thou hast given diligence to make it sure;

2 Pet. i. 10. If this night thy soul be called away, canst thou truly say that thou art an heir of life, and hast laid up thy treasure there beforehand? If thou say that thou hopest well, and no man can do more, and thus dost desperately cast thy everlasting life upon a careless venture, I must tell thee first that assurance may be had. Would God bid us rejoice that our names are written in heaven, if it were a thing that could not by any means be known? Would he bid us give diligence to make our calling and election sure, if it were a thing that could not by any diligence be attained? And I must add that presumption is no sign of a safe condition. It shall not go well with you, because you imagine it shall go well. A man in a dropsy or consumption will not live by saying he hopes he shall not die. Yea, more, I must add, that a careless venturousness is a mark of misery. For a man that valueth God and his salvation, cannot put off a matter of such eternal consequence so slightly and disregardingly. And a fear and care about your salvation would be a far better sign. For the most part, they are safest that fear their danger, and they are in the saddest case that are never sad at the consideration of their case. It is not your bold and confident conceits that will open heaven to you; and therefore, I beseech you, presently look out for surer grounds of peace than these.

If you say, How can it be known to me whether my name be written in heaven or not? I shall briefly, but satisfactorily, answer it.

In general, if thou know that thou art one that God hath promised heaven to, thou mayest know thy title, which is meant by the writing of thy name in heaven, and thou mayest know that this promise shall be made good.

More particularly, 1. If thou hast had such an effectual sight of the vanity of earth, and of the heavenly felicity, that heaven hath the preëminence in thy practical estimation and choice, and thou hast resolved that heaven or nothing shall be thy happiness, and art so far at a point with all things under the sun, as that thou art resolved to stick closer to Christ than unto them, and, whatever it cost thee, to take the fruition of God forever as thy portion; if, upon consideration of the difference between heaven and earth, God and the creatures, eternity and time, thou hast heartily devoted thyself to God, and art willing to be his servant upon the terms that he inviteth thee on, thou mayest be assured that thy name is written in heaven; Matt. vi. 19. 21. and xvi. 24—26. and xiii. 45, 46. Luke xviii. 33.

But if earth be the place of thy highest estimation and choice, where thou placest thy chief affections, and which thou adherest to more resolutely than to God, and which thou wilt not leave

whatever thou lose by it, then, as earth hath thy heart, so earth is thy treasure, and thy name is not written in heaven, but in the dust.

2. If the obtaining of heaven be the principal part of thy care and business, the principal work which thou mindest in the world, it is certain that thy name is written in heaven ; (Col. iii. 1—4.) otherwise not.

3. If, finding thyself lost and filthy in thy sin, thou see the necessity and sufficiency of Christ, and, being desirous of his grace and righteousness, dost unfeignedly take him for thy Savior and Lord, and give up thyself to be healed, and justified, and saved by him, as the only physician of souls, thou art then his member, and thy name is written in heaven ; John i. 12. and iii. 16. 18.

4. If the heavenly nature be most amiable in thine eyes, and the heavenly life be it that thou most desirest ; if thou hadst rather be holy than be unholy, and hadst rather perfectly obey the Lord than live in sin, and longest to be better, and studiest to live in obedience to the Lord, thy name is in heaven, and thither thou art passing, and it will be thy reward. But if thou love not holiness, but hadst rather be excused from it, and live in thy sins, thou art as yet no heir of heaven ; John iii. 19. and xii. 26. Psalm i. and cxix.

5. If thy name be written in heaven, thou hast a special love to the heirs of heaven. And the more of heaven thou findest in their hearts and lives, the more amiable they are unto thee, and the sweeter is their converse ; 1 John iii. 14. Psalm xv. 4.

I shall name no more. These evidences are sure. By these you may know, while you sit here in these seats, yea, if you lay in the darkest dungeon, that you are the heirs of heaven, and your names are there.

But where there is no such work ; no high estimation of heaven, and resolution for it ; no mortification or conquest of the world ; no prevalent care and diligence for heaven ; no resignation of the soul to Christ, that by faith and holiness we might follow him to that glory ; no love to holiness, and no delight in the heirs of heaven,—such persons are yet aliens to the heavenly nature and inheritance, and cannot rejoice that their names are written in heaven.

And now I have set the glass before you, I earnestly entreat you that you will here seriously view the complexion of your souls. It more nearly concerneth you to know whether your names are written in heaven, and where it is that you must dwell forever, than to know how to manage your trades and business, or to know whether you shall stir from this place alive, or ever see another day. O, sirs, take heed of living in self-deceit till your trying and recovering time is past ! This is it that your enemy aims at : he

will do all that malice and subtlety can do to keep such matters from your sober thoughts, or to make you groundlessly presume that you are safe, or securely to cast your souls upon a desperate venture, under pretense of trusting in Christ, till he hath you where he would have you ; and then he will himself take off the veil, and let you know that you had time and light to have acquainted you with your disease and misery, while you might have had a free, and sure, and full remedy. Then you shall know that it was long of your self-deceit if you would not understand and believe in time, that if you lived after the flesh, you should die, (Rom. viii. 13.) and that it is the pure in heart that shall see God ; Matt. v. 8. Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God ? Be not deceived ; neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God ; 1 Cor. vi. 9, 10. For this ye know, that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God. Let no man deceive you with vain words, for because of these things cometh the wrath of God on the children of disobedience ; Ephes. v. 5, 6. And can any thing justify the rejoicing of men in so sad a state ?

Give me leave, therefore, to make a little closer application of the several parts of my text to the several sorts of persons whom they do concern. 1. And first to all that yet are not become the heirs of heaven : Rejoice not though devils were subject to you, till your souls are subject to him that bought them. Rejoice not though you had conquered all the world, and had your wills of all your adversaries, as long as you are conquered by your fleshly lusts, and Satan leads you captive at his will ; 2 Tim. ii. 25, 26. Rejoice not though you had all the riches of the earth, as long as you are void of the riches of grace, and have nothing to do with the riches of glory. Rejoice not though all men should honor you, and bow to you, and proclaim your fame, as long as you are the drudges of the devil and the flesh, and the God of heaven proclaimeth you his enemies, and resolveth on your destruction, if you do not soundly and seasonably repent ; Luke xix. 27. and xiii. 3. 5.

Be not offended with me, that, on a day of thanksgiving, I thus far forbid you to rejoice, for it is not you that are qualified for it, or have any part or fellowship in this business, being in the gall of bitterness, and bonds of your iniquity, your hearts being not right in the sight of God. Though the invitation be general, it supposeth that you come prepared, and therefore even he that calls men to his joys, will find out him that hath not on the wedding garment, "and will bind him, and cast him into outer darkness, where shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth ;" Matt. xxii. 12, 13.

1. Alas ! sirs, if God would allow you to rejoice, how willingly could I allow it you ! But hear whether he approve it ; Jam. v. 1. 3. "Go to, now, ye rich men, weep and howl for the miseries that are coming on you. Your riches are corrupted and your garments moth-eaten ; your gold and silver is cankered, and the rust of them shall be a witness against you, and shall eat your flesh as it were fire. Ye have heaped treasure together for the last days ;" Luke vi. 24—26. "Woe unto you that are rich, (if you have no better riches,) for ye have received your consolation. Woe unto you that are full, for ye shall hunger. Woe unto you that laugh now, for ye shall mourn and weep. Woe unto you when all men shall speak well of you," &c. You may find your lesson, Joel ii. 12, 13. "Therefore also now, saith the Lord, turn ye even to me with all your heart, with fasting, and with weeping, and with mourning ; and rend your heart." You see what God calls such men to. And if he allow you not to rejoice till you are converted, if I or any man should flatter or cheat you into joy, it would be but a curse to you, and not a benefit.

2. Were your joy but reasonable, I would not discourage it. But a madman's laughter is no very lovely spectacle to yourselves. And I appeal to all the reason in the world, whether it be reasonable for a man to live in mirth that is yet unregenerate, and under the curse and wrath of God, and can never say, in the midst of his greatest pomp or pleasure, that he is sure to be an hour out of hell, and may be sure he shall be there forever, if he die before he have a new, a holy and a heavenly nature, though he should die with laughter in his face, or with a jest in his mouth, or in the boldest presumption that he shall be saved ; yet, as sure as the word of God is true, he will find himself everlastingly undone, as soon as ever his soul is departed from his body, and he sees the things that he would not believe. Sirs, is it rational to dance in Satan's fetters, at the brink of hell, when so many hundred diseases are all ready to mar the mirth, and snatch away the guilty soul, and cast it into endless desperation ? I exceedingly pity the godly in their unwarrantable, melancholy griefs ; and much more an ungodly man that is bleeding under his wounds of conscience. But a man that is merry in the depth of misery, is more to be pitied than he. Methinks it is one of the most pitiful sights in all the world to see a man ruffle it out in bravery, and spend his precious time in pleasures, and melt into sensual, foolish mirth, that is a stranger to God, and within a step of endless woe ! When I see their pomp, and feasting, and attendance, and hear their laughter, and insipid jests, and fiddlers at their doors or tables, and all things carried as if they had made sure of heaven, it saddeneth my heart to think, alas ! how little do these sinners know the state that they are

in, the God that now beholdeth them, the change that they are near ! How little do they think of the flames that they are hastening to, and the outcries and lamentations that will next ensue !

3. Your mirth is disingenuous and dishonest as long as you are without a title to heaven. You slight the Lord that can find such matters of rejoicing, when you have not his favor to rejoice in, and are under his displeasure. While you are refusing Christ, abusing grace, resisting the Spirit, serving the flesh, and undoing your own souls, it cannot be an honest or ingenuous thing for such as you to live in joy.

4. If your mirth were truly honorable to you, it were the more excusable. But to laugh in sin and misery, and make merry so near the endless woe, is a greater shame to your understandings, than to make sport to set your house on fire. This is the laughter of which Solomon might well say, "Thou art mad," and the mirth of which he saith, "What doth it?" Eccl. ii. 2.

5. Would thy mirth do thee any good, we would not discourage it, yea, if it did not do thee harm. But, O, how many are now in sorrow by the means of their unseasonable, sinful mirth ! They are too jocund to hear the preacher, or their consciences, or to observe the checks and motions of God's Spirit, or to spend now and then an hour in retired, sober thoughts of their everlasting state. Should we but presume to call them to exercise their reason, and mind them of these most needful things, and tell them, "O, poor, distracted mortals, your time is given you for greater things than to fiddle and dance, and drink, and jest, and prate, and compliment it away !" should we not be thought morose, or melancholy, or fanatics ? And should we not have some such answer as their ancestors in Sodom gave to Lot ? (Gen. xix. 9.) "Stand back. This one fellow came in to sojourn, and he will needs be a judge : now will we deal worse with thee than with them ;" we will take a course with these controllers. Alas ! it is this foolish mirth that casteth men's reason and conscience asleep, and drowns the voice of sober words, so that God himself cannot be heard. Could we but get men to retired soberness and seriousness, we should hope that we might find a friend within them, and that we speak to men, and that reason would take part with the most reasonable motions that are made to them from the Lord.

6. Lastly. Would your groundless mirth endure, we would not say so much against it. But, alas ! to be merry for a day, and then to lie in misery forever, is a thing deserving no encouragement. We see it is a merry world with many that have least cause of mirth ; but how long will they continue it ? To see a man laugh, and play, and feast in a chariot that drives on so fast to death, in a vessel that is on so swift a stream that ends in the gulf

of endless horror, is a doleful sight. O, how quickly will that merry countenance turn sad; those proud looks be turned to an earthy paleness; and those wanton eyes be mouldered to dust, and leave the empty holes to warn the next spectators to use his eyes more wisely while he hath them! How quickly will these same sensual persons exchange their mirth for sighs and groans, and endless torments, and fruitless lamentations, when they shall have everlasting leisure to peruse their lives, and to consider their ways, which now there is no persuading them to consider of! Who can encourage such hurtful and unseasonable mirth as this? "Rejoice not, O Israel, for joy, as other people, for thou hast gone a whoring from thy God;" Hos. ix. 1. "Rejoice not in a thing of nought," (Amos vi. 13.) much less in the sufferings of your brethren; (Obad. 12.) and least of all, in any hurt that befalls the church. If enmity to holiness, and exalted impiety, should take occasion to triumph, we answer as Micah, (vii. 8, 9.) "Rejoice not against me, O mine enemy; when I fall, I shall arise; when I sit in darkness, the Lord shall be a light unto me; I will bear the indignation of the Lord, because I have sinned against him, until he plead my cause, and execute judgment for me: he will bring me forth to the light, and I shall behold his righteousness."

If you think I have stood too long on the first part of my text, it is not to rebuke your holy joy, but only to promote it, and repress that carnal joy which is more destructive to it than sorrow itself. As you must "seek first the kingdom of God, and its righteousness, and then other things shall be added to you," (Matt. vi. 33.) so must you rejoice first in the kingdom of heaven, and the righteousness that is the way thereto; and then you may add a moderate rejoicing in the things below, in a due subordination thereunto. You have the sum in the words of the Holy Ghost, "Thus saith the Lord, let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might; let not the rich man glory in his riches; but let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I am the Lord," &c. Jer. ix. 23, 24.

My next address must be to them whose names are written in heaven, and that with a twofold exhortation.

I. "Rejoice that your names are written in heaven." It is you, Christians, that joy of right belongs to. Little know the lovers of pleasure more than God, that they lose a thousand fold more pleasure than they win; and that by running from a holy life for pleasure, they run from the fire into the water for heat, and from the sun into a dungeon for light. O show the unbelieving world, by your rejoicing, how they are mistaken in their choice! Be ashamed that an empty sot, and one that must be forever a fire-

brand in hell, should live a more joyful life than you ! O do not so wrong your Lord, your faith, your endless joys, as to walk in heaviness, and cast away the joy of the Lord, which is your strength, and to be still complaining, when those that are prepared for the slaughter are as frolic as if the bitterness of death were past. It is well that you have so much life as to feel your sicknesses ; but it is not well, that, because you are yet diseased, the life of grace and of glory should be so ineffectual to your comfort. And yet, alas ! how common is it to see the most miserable frisk and flee, while the heirs of life are sinfully vexing themselves with the inordinate fears of death ! Lift up thy head, Christian, and remember whence came thy graces, even thy least desires, and whither do they tend. Where is thy Father and thy Head, and the most dear of thy companions ? Where is it that thou must live to all eternity ? Doth it beseem a companion of angels, a member of Christ, a child of God, an heir of heaven, to be grieved at every petty cross, and to lay by all the sense of his felicity, because some trifle of the world falls cross to his desires and commodity ? Is it seemly for one that must be everlastingly as full of joy as the sun is full of light, to live in such a self-troubling, drooping state, as to disgrace religion, and frighten away the ungodly from the doors of grace, that, by your joyful lives, might be provoked to enter ? I know, as to your happiness, the matter is not comparatively great ; because if mistakes and the devil's malice should keep you sad here a hundred years, yet Heaven will wipe away all tears, and those joys will be long enough when they come ; and as the joy of the ungodly, so the sorrows of the humble, upright soul will be but for a moment ; and though you weep, and lament when the world rejoiceth, as their joy shall be turned into sorrow, so your sorrow shall be turned into joy, and your joy shall no man take from you. But, in the mean time, is it not shame and pity that you should live so unanswerable to the mercies of the Lord ? that you should sinfully grieve the comforting Spirit by the willful grieving of yourselves, and that you should peevishly cast away your precious mercies, when you so much need them, by reason of the troubles of a vexatious world, which you cannot avoid ? That you, even you, that are saved by the Lord, should still be questioning it, or unthankfully denying his great salvation, and so much hinder the salvation of others ? For the Lord's sake, Christians, and for your souls' sake, and in pity to the ungodly, yield not to the tempter, that would trouble you when he cannot damn you. Is God your Father, and Christ your Savior, and the Spirit your Sanctifier, and heaven your home ? And will you make all, for the present, as nothing to you, by a causeless, obstinate denial ? If you are in doubt, let not

mere passionate fears be heard ; and let not the devil, the enemy of your peace, be heard ; but peruse your evidences, and still remember, as the sum of all, that the will is the man, and what you would be that you are before the Lord. If you cannot see the sincerity of your hearts, go to your faithful, able guides, and open the case to them, and let not passion prevail against the scripture and reason which they bring. Yea, if in your trouble you cannot, by all their helps, perceive the uprightness of your hearts, I must tell you, you may stay yourselves much upon their judgment of your state. Though it cannot give you full assurance, it may justly help to silence much of your self-accusations, and give you the comfort of probability. If a physician that feels not what you feel, shall yet, upon your speeches and other evidences, tell you that he is confident your disease is not mortal, nor containeth any cause of fear, you may rationally be much encouraged by his judgment, though it give you no certainty of life. As wicked men through contempt, so many godly people through melancholy, do lose much of the fruit of the office of the ministry, which lieth much in this assisting men to judge of the life or death of their souls. 'Alas!' say they, 'he feels not what I feel: he used to judge charitably, and he knoweth not me so well as I know myself.' But when you have told him faithfully, as you do your physician, what it is that you know by yourself, he is able to pass a far sounder judgment of your life or death than yourselves can do, for all your feeling ; for he knows better what those symptoms signify, and what is used to be the issue of such a case as yours. Be not, then, so proud or willful as to refuse the judgment of your faithful pastors, about the state of your souls, in a confidence on your own.

And look not for more, as necessary to your comforts, than God hath made necessary. Is it nothing to have a title to eternal life, unless you be also as holy as you desire ? Yea, is it nothing to have a desire to be more holy ? Will you have no comfort, as long as you have distractions, or dullness, or such like imperfection in duty ; and till you have no disease of soul to trouble you, that is, till you have laid by flesh, and arrived at your perfect joy ? Dare not to disobey the voice of God : "Be glad in the Lord, and rejoice, ye righteous ; and shout for joy, all ye that are upright in heart ;" Psalm xxxii. 11. "Rejoice evermore ;" 1 Thess. v. 16. Let it be something that heaven cannot weigh down that shall suppress thy joy. Art thou in poverty, and is not heaven sufficient riches ? Art thou in disgrace, and shalt thou not have honor enough in heaven ? Art thou in danger from the injustice or the wrath of man, and is he not almighty that hath undertaken to justify thee ? Rom. viii. 33, 34. Dost thou languish under pain-

ing sicknesses, and is there not everlasting health in heaven? Art thou weak in knowledge, in memory, in grace, in duty; troubled with uncommanded thoughts and passions; and was it not so on earth with all who are now in heaven? O, Christians! make conscience of obeying this command: "Rejoice that your names are written in heaven." Did you but know how God approveth such rejoicing, and how much it pleaseth him above your pining sorrows; and how it strengtheneth the soul, and sweeteneth duty, and easeth suffering, and honoreth religion, and encourageth others, and how suitable it is to gospel grace, and to your high relations and ends, and how much better it serves to subdue the very sins that trouble you, than your fruitless, self-weakening complainings do—I say, did you well consider all these things, it would sure revive your drooping spirits.

And do not say now, 'I would rejoice if I were sure that my name were written in heaven; but I am not sure.' For, 1. Who is it long of that you are not sure? You may be sure that he that valueth and seeketh heaven as better than earth, and that loveth the holy way to heaven, and the most heavenly people, is indeed an heir of heaven; and you may be sure, if you will, that this is your own case; and yet you say you are not sure that your names are written in heaven. If God give you his grace, and you deny it, will you therefore deny your right to glory, and make one sin the excuse for another?

2. And if you are not sure, is it nothing to have your probabilities, and hopes, and the judgment of your able, faithful pastors, that your souls are in a safe condition? We dare not say so to the careless world, nor to the most of men, as we do to you.

Especially, take heed lest melancholy habituate you to fears and griefs; and then religion must bear the blame, and you undergo a calamitous life, though you are the heirs of heaven. To this end, 1. Use not musing, serious thoughts beyond the strength of your brain and intellect. 2. Place not too much of your religion in the perusal and study of your hearts; but (for such as are inclined to melancholy) it is the fruitfulest way to be much in expending duties abroad, and laboring to do good to others. Such duties have less of self, and have much of God, and divert the troubling, melancholy thoughts, and bring in more comfort by way of reward, than is usually got by more direct inquiry after comfort. 3. Use not too much solitariness and retiredness: man is a sociable creature; and as his duty lieth much with others, so his comfort lieth in the same way as his duty. 4. Take heed of worldly sorrows, and therefore of overvaluing worldly things. 5. Take heed of idleness, or of thinking that the duties of holiness are all that you have to mind; but make conscience of being diligent in a particu-

far calling, which diverts the hurtful, troubling thoughts, and is pleasing unto God. 6. Take not every sickness of your souls for death, but rejoice in that life which enableth you to be troubled at your diseases. Keep under melancholy by these means, (and the advice of the physician,) and you will escape a very great hindrance to this high and holy duty of heavenly rejoicing.

11. But you think, perhaps, that I have all this while forgotten the duty proper to the day: No; but I was not fit to speak for it, nor you fit to hear and practice it, till the impediment of carnal rejoicing was removed, and till we had begun with heavenly joy. It is heaven that must animate all our comforts. They are so far sweet as heaven is in them, and no further. Now, therefore, if you first rejoice for your heavenly interest, I dare safely then persuade you to rejoice in the mercies which we are to be thankful for this day. And though some of them are but yet in the birth, if not in the womb, and we are yet uncertain what they will prove, that will not excuse us for any unthankfulness for the first conception or infancy of our mercies. And though Satan seek to get advantage by them, that will not excuse us for our overlooking the mercy in itself. And though there are yet abundance of fears and troubles on the hearts of many of Christ's servants through the land, we cannot by any such accidents be excused from the thankful observation of the workings of the Lord. All mercies on earth, even spiritual mercies, have their mixtures of trouble, and their imperfections; but must not therefore be denied or extenuated. And though many that are dear to us, smarting by the change, will be offended and grieved at our most moderate thanksgiving, we must not therefore offend the Lord by our disregardfulness of his works.

There are these things to be commemorated by us this day, which I dare not overlook. 1. That God hath so honored his justice and impartiality as to show how he hateth sin in whomsoever. And indeed the justice of God itself would seem more amiable to us, were we not so selfish as to think hardly of all that is hurtful unto us. Justice demonstrateth the holiness of God, and all the appearances of his holiness are lovely in themselves.

2. That the holy God hath disowned heresy and divisions on the one side, as well as impiety and profaneness on the other; and that his wisdom thought meet to acquaint us experimentally with the hurtfulness of both, and our danger of both, as he did in former ages of the church. We first found the serpentine malice of the ungodly, and God delivered us when they would have swallowed us up. But while we only heard and read of heresy and schism, and that too often abusively applied to many of the most peaceable servants of the Lord, we understood not the mis-

chief of those evils, but were ready to take the very names to be but the reproaches of piety itself. But God saw meet to let out a flood of this sort of calamities, and to suffer heresy to disgrace itself by its unrighteous fruits, that by those fruits we might the better know it. We never knew before how much we are beholden to him for saving us from this sort of evils, and should never have sufficiently hated them, if we had not smarted by them.

3. It is a mercy to be thankful for, that thus the church is notably fortified against ever relapsing into heresy or schism for the time to come.

4. And that the frailties of men professing godliness having so lamentably appeared, they are taught to take heed of spiritual pride, and to know and distrust themselves, and not to be high-minded, but to fear.

5. It is a very great mercy, for which I must profess I was thankful from the first appearance of it,* that so many that I hope are dear to God, have the advantage of his frowns to further their conviction, and repentance, and salvation. As prosperity was the temptation by which ambition got advantage, and Providence misunderstood was pleaded against the holy rule, what a mercy it is that Providence also should undeceive them, and vindicate itself, and teach men hereafter by the example of this age to stay till the end before they take the sense of Providence, or rather to adhere to the holy word because the longest liver shall be too short-lived to see the end, so far as to furnish him for such an interpretation! And therefore that word that is the glass in which we can foresee the end must be our guide. I had rather have my friend poor and penitent, than wealthy and impenitent; and rather in a prison than in the chains of pride. And am glad that God hath taken away the snare that brought so many souls to so sad a pass; and hath undeceived them in part, that had carnal thoughts of the happiness of saints, and looked for temporal reign and dignity; forgetting that rich men must pass through a needle's eye to heaven, and that lowliness, meekness, humility, patience, forbearing, forgiving, self-denial, contempt of this world, and living all upon things unseen, is the life that Christ by his doctrine and example taught us, and how ill prosperity befriendeth these. I am in far more hope to see many Peters go out and weep bitterly, than I was when they prospered in a sinful way. And if yet any be so far unhumbled as to deny it to have been a sinful way,

* We kept this thanksgiving voluntarily in Worcestershire, by agreement among the associated ministers, as we do here this day. See the agreement published by *The Weekly Mercury*.

I am in far greater hope of their conviction now than heretofore. In their greatness few durst tell them of their crimes; and those of us that did it were voluminously reproached, threatened, calumniated, and represented as turbulent to the world. (It being usual with base-spirited men to take the judgment of the greatest for their rule, and to think all suffering to be just and honorable that is inflicted by such as few dare to contradict.) But now, I hope, plain dealing may recover many that before lived under flatteries, and were above reproof. I must profess that my hopes of the saving of many that are dear to me, by the furtherance of this providence, is matter of so much thankfulness to me, that were I sure to suffer with them, I would yet give thanks.

6. It is matter of thanksgiving to me, that God hath so far owned an unanimous, painful, faithful ministry, (for all their many sad infirmities,) as first to break the profane opposers of them, and then to scatter the adversaries on the other side. Ever since I heard it so familiar among them to call Christ's faithful servants by so many reproachful names, as priests, (in scorn,) presbyters, drivins, jack-presbyters, black-coats, pulpiteers, &c.; and their friends priest-ridden; to suffer quakers, openly, in the streets, to revile them as deceivers, dogs, wolves, hirelings, false prophets, liars, and all the names that hell could teach them, I waited in fear for the judgments of the Lord; which he hath executed in our sight, and caused us to know, that his delays are no desertions of his servants, nor justification of our revilers. And let it stand as a warning to you that have seen it, and you that have executed the punishments of God upon the reproachers, that you take heed of falling into the same crime, and dashing on the rock on which they have been broken; but let all England hear and fear, and do no more so malignantly or presumptuously.

And O that the unworthy ministers of Christ may remember that we are not vindicated and delivered to contend, or to imitate our afflictors, in seeking greatness to ourselves, nor to live in idleness, and neglect the souls committed to our care.

7. It is very great cause of thankfulness in my eyes, that from first to last God hath been so tender of the honor of his unanimous sober people, and his cause, of the innocency and consciences of his servants, as to execute his afflictions mostly by the hands of erring men, and to keep the rest, by imprisonments, seclusions, and other means, so far from all appearance of consent or irregularities; and that at last he hath put an opportunity into their hands to declare to the world their innocency in things with which they were reproached; and that while profane opposers of religion did boast and vapor, and swear and curse, and drink healths for

his Majesty's restitution, it is those whom they reproached that have silently and effectually accomplished it, and that with speed as soon as they had power.

8. It is some matter of thankfulness to me, that whereas, to our perpetual shame, we could not in so many years compose the disagreements in church affairs among us, we are not altogether without hope that agreement may be now more effectually procured; not only because those carnal advantages that hindered it with some are taken from them, and suffering will dispose some more to peace, but because we are persuaded the disposition, and we are sure the interest, of His Majesty standeth for our reconciliation and unity. And verily we are the most inexcusable people in the world, if our own long and sad experience do not resolve us to do the utmost in that work ourselves, which, if we are not horribly proud and willful, is easy to accomplish.

9. And it is matter of thanksgiving that God hath been all along so wonderfully seen in the work; which makes us hope that the issue will yet be for our good. The first sparks that set fire on the last foundation are yet much unknown, but were so little as makes it the more strange. The wonderful whirlwind that suddenly finished the subversion was marvelous, though sad, because of the wickedness of men. The introducing of the remnant of the members; the stop that was given them, when they had voted in a committee a liberty in religion that excepted not Popery; the casting them out by those that set them up; the discoveries of the fallaciousness of some of their chiefs, who were then tempted into a compliance with the army, and were fabricating a new form of a commonwealth; the breaking of them and of the army, in part by the returning members; the unexpected stop that was given first to their proceedings by His Excellency in the North; the expeditiousness, the constancy, the unanimity, and strange successfulness of that attempt, that an army who thought themselves only fit to be the nation's security for liberty and religion, and were thought necessary to be entailed upon us to that end; that were so heightened in their own and other men's esteem, by their many and wonderful successes, should in a moment (we scarce know how) fly all into pieces as a grenado that is fired; that Ireland at the same time should be so strangely and easily reduced, and that by sober, faithful hands, and by so few, and with such speed; that this famous city should be so unanimously excited to concur so eminently, and contribute very much to the success; that His Excellency should conquer without any blows, and all be despatched that since is done with no considerable resistance; all this, and much more, do make us wonder at the hand of God. And seldom is there so

wonderful an appearance of the Lord, but it holds forth matter that is amiable as well as admirable to his church.

Lastly. That all this is done with little or no effusion at all of blood, when so much blood was shed in the foregoing changes, advanceth the wonder to a greater height; and I hope His Majesty and the two Houses of Parliament will take notice how God hath gone before them in a tender and unbloody change, and will not hearken to them that protest against revenge, while they would use it under the name of justice. When the wheel of Providence turneth so fast, if all that have the advantage of executing their wills under the name of justice, should take their advantage, you know what names and sufferings multitudes of the most useful members in such nations, in the several vicissitudes, must incur to the detriment of the commonwealth and governors.

III. You see what cause we have of thankfulness; but I must tell you that these, as all inferior mercies, are imperfect things, and being but means to greater matters, (the heavenly interest first treated on,) they are no further significant or valuable than they have some tendency to their end: and I must further tell you, that it is much committed into the hands of man, under God, whether such beginnings shall have a happy or unhappy end. If Christ become to many a stumbling-stone, and be set for the fall of many in Israel, (Luke ii. 34.) and if the gospel itself prove the savor of death to some, no wonder if it be yet possible and too easy for a sinful land to turn these forementioned mercies and successes into most heavy judgments, and to rob themselves of all the honor and the benefit. And, therefore, above all, for the Lord's sake, and for a poor, tired, yet hoping nation's sake, and for the sake of the cause of Christ through the world, I beseech you all, from the highest to the lowest, that you will be awakened to an holy vigilancy, and look about you in your several places, lest the enemy of Christ and you should play his after game more successfully than now you can foresee; and lest the return of a sinful nation to their vomit should make the end yet worse than the beginning. It is not enough to have begun; the fruit of all is yet behind. I must here deal plainly with you, however it be taken, lest I be charged with unfaithfulness at the dreadful tribunal to which both you and I are hastening. If these beginnings, through your neglects, or any others that have been the instruments, should now be turned to the reviving and strengthening of profaneness, and malignity against the holy ways of God; to the introduction of mere formality in religion; to the casting out or weakening the hands of the faithful ministers in the land; to the destruction of order and discipline in the churches; to the suppression of orderly and

edifying meetings for mutual assistance in the matters of salvation ; or to the cherishing of ignorance or Popery ; in the people it will blast the glory of all that you have done, and turn the mercy into gall. Believe it, the interest of Christ and holiness will be found at last the surest ground for any prince to build his interest upon ; and the owning of corrupt and contrary interests that engage men in quarrels with the interest of Christ, is it that hath undone so many princes and states already, that it should make the greatest learn, at last, to account it their highest honor to be the servants of the King of Saints, and to devote their power to the accomplishment of his will. I need not tell you that it is the sober, godly, conscientious sort of men who know what they do, and why, that will be the honor of their governors, and the most useful of their subjects, and not the barbarous, malignant rabble, that understand not what belongs to the pleasing of God, the happiness of themselves, the good of the commonwealth, or the honor of their king. And do you not think that remissness, to say no worse, of magistrates, who should restrain the insolencies of such, is a great dishonor to our nation, and a great temptation to many in the country, that stand at a distance from the fountain of affairs, to continue their fears lest we have changed for the worse ? Put yourselves in their cases, and tell me whether you could, with equal cheerfulness, keep this day, if you were used, as many able, faithful ministers and people are in the cities and countries of the land, who have their persons assaulted, their windows battered, their ministrations openly reviled, and that go in danger of their lives from the brutish rabble that were formerly exasperated by the magistrates' punishing them, or the ministers' reproof, or crossing them in their sins. As physicians are judged of, not so much by the excellency of their remedies, as by their success, and the people think of them as they see the patients live or die, so will they do by your great performances, which you mention before the Lord this day. Should they prove to the suppression of serious godliness, and the setting up of the wicked of the land, I need not tell you what a name it will leave unto the actors to all generations. But if you vigilantly improve them as you have given us abundant reason to expect, then the issue shall be the healing concord of the churches, the curbing of profaneness, the promoting of a plain and serious ministry, and of the diligent service of the Lord. This is it that will make your names immortal, that have been the happy instruments of so blessed a work. How joyfully, then, will the subjects commemorate the happy introduction of their sovereign ! With what love and honor will they hear his name ! How readily will they obey him ! How heartily will they pray for him ! How precious will

your memory be! And this will be numbered among the wonderful deliverances of England. If godliness be persecuted, or made a common scorn in the land, the holy God will vindicate his honor, and make their names a scorn and curse that shall procure it; but if you exalt him, he will exalt you. Protect his lambs, and he will be your Protector. He is with you while you are with him; 2 Chron. xv. 2. "Those that honor him he will honor; and those that despise him shall be lightly esteemed;" 1 Sam. ii. 30.

THE LIFE OF FAITH.

A SERMON,

**FORMERLY PREACHED BEFORE HIS MAJESTY, AND PUBLISHED
BY HIS COMMAND;**

WITH ANOTHER,

ADDED FOR THE FULLER APPLICATION.

THE two Sermons which follow constitute the First Part of a work, entitled The Life of Faith, which fills a volume of six hundred pages. As these two sermons are a complete work by themselves, and as their value is independent of their connection with the larger treatise to which they were attached, it will be deemed no injustice to the subject, or to the author, that they are here separately inserted.—EDITOR.

THE LIFE OF FAITH.

HEBREWS xi. 1.

NOW FAITH IS THE SUBSTANCE OF THINGS HOPED FOR, THE EVIDENCE OF THINGS NOT SEEN.

THOUGH the wicked are distinguished into hypocrites and unbelievers, yet hypocrites themselves are unbelievers too. They have no faith which they can justify, by its prevailing efficacy and works; and therefore have no faith by which they can be justified. Because their discovery is needful to their recovery, and all our salvation depends on the sincerity of our faith, I have chosen this text, which is a description of Faith, that the opening of it may help us for the opening of our hearts, and resolving the great question, on which our endless life depends.

To be a Christian, and to be a believer in Christ, are words in Scripture of the same signification. If you have not faith, you are not Christians. This faith hath various offices and objects. By it we are justified, sanctified and saved. We are justified, not by believing that we are justified, but by believing that we may be justified; not by receiving justification immediately, but by receiving Christ for our justification; nor by mere accepting the pardon in itself, but by first receiving him that procureth and bestoweth it, on his terms; not by mere accepting health, but by receiving the Physician and his remedies, for health.

Faith is the practical believing in God as promising, and Christ as procuring justification and salvation; or the practical belief and acceptance of life, as procured by Christ, and promised by God in the gospel.

The everlasting fruition of God in heaven is the ultimate object. No man believeth in Christ as Christ, that believeth not in him for eternal life. As Faith looks at Christ as the necessary means, and at the divine benignity as the fountain, and at his veracity as the foundation or formal object, and at the promise as the true signification of his will, so doth it ultimately look at our salvation (begun on earth, and perfected in heaven) as the end, for which it looketh at the rest.

No wonder therefore if the Holy Ghost, here speaking of the

dignity and power of faith, do principally insist on that part of its description, which is taken from this final object.

As Christ himself in his humiliation was rejected by the Gentiles, and a stumbling-stone to the Jews, despised and not esteemed; (Isa. liii. 2, 3.) having "made himself of no reputation;" (Phil. ii. 7.) so faith in Christ as incarnate and crucified, is despised and counted foolishness by the world. But as Christ in his glory, and the glory of believers, shall force them to an awful admiration, so faith itself, as exercised on that glory, is more glorious in the eyes of all. Believers are never so revered by the world as when they converse in heaven, and "the Spirit of Glory resteth on them;" 1 Pet. iv. 14.

How faith, by beholding this glorious end, doth move all the faculties of the soul, and subdue the inclinations and interests of the flesh, and make the greatest sufferings tolerable, is the work of the Holy Ghost in this chapter to demonstrate, which, beginning with the description, proceeds to the proof by a cloud of witnesses. There are two sorts of persons (and employments) in the world, for whom there are two contrary ends hereafter. One sort subjects their reason to their sensual or carnal interest. The other subjects their senses to their reason, cleared, conducted and elevated by faith. Things present or possessed are the riches of the sensual, and the bias of their hearts and lives: things absent, but hoped for, are the riches of believers, which actuate their chief endeavors.

This is the sense of the text which I have read to you; which, setting things hoped for in opposition to things present, and things unseen to those that sense doth apprehend, assureth us that faith (which fixeth on the first) doth give to its object a subsistence, presence and evidence; that is, it seeth that which supplieth the want of presence and visibility. The *ὑπόστασις* is that which, 'quoad effectum,' is equal to a present subsistence. And the *ἔλεγχος*, the evidence is somewhat which, 'quoad effectum,' is equal to visibility. As if he had said, Though the glory promised to believers, and expected by them, be yet to come, and only hoped for, and be yet unseen and only believed, yet is the sound believer as truly affected with it, and acted by its attractive force, as if it were present and before his eyes, as a man is by an inheritance, or estate in reversion, or out of sight if well secured, and not only by that which is present to his view. The Syriac interpreter, instead of a translation, gives us a true exposition of the words, viz. 'Faith is a certainty of those things that are in hope, as if they did already actually exist, and the revelation of those things that are not seen.'

Or you may take the sense in this proposition, which I am next to open further, and apply, viz. That the nature and use of faith

is to be as it were instead of presence, possession, and sight ; or to make the things that will be, as if they were already in existence ; and the things unseen which God revealeth, as if our bodily eyes beheld them.

1. Not that faith doth really change its object.

2. Nor doth it give the same degree of apprehensions and affections, as the sight of present things would do. But, 1. Things invisible are the objects of our faith. 2. And faith is effectual instead of sight to all these uses : 1. The apprehension is as infallible, because of the objective certainty, (though not so satisfactory to our imperfect souls,) as if the things themselves were seen. 2. The will is determined by it in its necessary consent and choice. 3. The affections are moved in the necessary degree. 4. It ruleth in our lives, and bringeth us through duty and suffering, for the sake of the happiness which we believe.

3. This faith is a grounded, wise and justifiable act ; an infallible knowledge ; and often called so in Scripture ; John vi. 69. Cor. xv. 58. Rom. viii. 28, &c. And the constitutive and efficient causes will justify the name.

We know and are infallibly sure of the truth of God, which we believe ; as it is said, " We believe and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God ;" (John vi. 69.) " We know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens ;" (2 Cor. v. 1.) " We know that all things work together for good to them that love God ;" (Rom. viii. 28.) " You know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord ;" (1 Cor. xv. 58.) " We know God spake to Moses ;" &c. (John ix. 29.) " We know God heareth not sinners ;" (John ix. 31.) " We know thou art a teacher come from God ;" John iii. 2. So 1 John iii. 5. 15. and 1 Pet. iii. 17. and many other Scriptures tell you, that believing God, is a certain infallible sort of knowledge.

I shall, in justification of the work of faith, acquaint you briefly with, 1. That in the nature of it : 2. And that in the causing of it, which advanceth it, to be an infallible knowledge.

1. The believer knows (as sure as he knows there is a God) that God is true, and his word is true, it being " impossible for God to lie ;" Heb. vi. 18. " God that cannot lie hath promised ;" Tit. i. 2.

2. He knows that the Holy Scripture is the word of God ; by his image which it beareth, and the many evidences of divinity which it containeth, and the many miracles (certainly proved) which Christ, and his Spirit in his servants, wrought to confirm the truth. 3. And therefore he knoweth assuredly the conclusion, that all this word of God is true.

And for the surer effecting of this knowledge, God doth not only set before us the ascertaining evidence of his own veracity, and the Scripture's divinity, but, moreover, 1. He giveth us to believe; Phil. i. 29. 2 Pet. i. 3. For it is "not of ourselves, but is the gift of God;" Ephes. ii. 8. Faith is one of the "fruits of the Spirit;" Gal. v. 22. By the drawing of the Father, we come to the Son. And he that hath knowledge given from heaven, will certainly know; and he that hath faith given him from heaven, will certainly believe. The heavenly light will dissipate our darkness, and infallibly illuminate. Whilst God sets before us the glass of the gospel, in which the things invisible are revealed, and also gives us eyesight to behold them, believers must needs be a heavenly people, as walking in that light which proceedeth from, and leadeth to the celestial, everlasting light.

2. And that faith may be so powerful as to serve instead of sight and presence, believers have the Spirit of Christ within them, to excite and actuate it, and help them against all temptations to unbelief, and to work in them all other graces that concur to promote the works of faith; and to mortify those sins that hinder our believing, and are contrary to a heavenly life. So that as the exercise of our sight, and taste, and hearing, and feeling, is caused by our natural life; so the exercise of faith and hope, and love, upon things unseen, is caused by the Holy Spirit, which is the principle of our new life: "We have received the Spirit, that we might know the things that are given us of God;" 1 Cor. ii. 12. This Spirit of God acquainteth us with God, with his veracity and his word: "We know him that hath said, I will never fail thee, nor forsake thee;" Heb. x. 30. This Spirit of Christ acquainteth us with Christ, and with his grace and will; 1 Cor. ii. 10—12. This heavenly Spirit acquainteth us with heaven, so that "we know that when Christ appeareth, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is;" 1 John iii. 2. And "we know that he was manifested to take away sin;" 1 John iii. 5. And will perfect his work, and present us spotless to his Father; Eph. v. 26, 27. This heavenly Spirit possesseth the saints with such heavenly dispositions and desires, as much facilitate the work of faith. It bringeth us to a heavenly conversation; and maketh us live as "fellow-citizens of the saints," and "in the household of God;" Eph. ii. 19. Phil. iii. 20. It is within us a Spirit of supplication, breathing heavenward, with sighs and groans which cannot be expressed; and as God knoweth the meaning of the Spirit, so the Spirit knows the mind of God; Rom. viii. 37. 1 Cor. ii. 11.

3. And the work of faith is much promoted by the spiritual experiences of believers. When they find a considerable part of the Holy Scriptures verified on themselves, it much confirmeth

their faith as to the whole. They are really possessed of that heavenly disposition, called The Divine Nature, and have felt the power of the word upon their hearts, renewing them to the image of God, mortifying their most dear and strong corruptions, showing them a greater beauty and desirableness in the objects of Faith, than is to be found in sensible things: they have found many of the promises made good upon themselves, in the answers of prayers, and in great deliverances, which strongly persuadeth them to believe the rest that are yet to be accomplished. And experience is a very powerful and satisfying way of conviction. He that feeleth, as it were, the first-fruits, the earnest, and the beginnings of heaven already in his soul, will more easily and assuredly believe that there is a heaven hereafter. "We know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know him that is true, and we are in him that is true, even in the Son Jesus Christ: this is the true God and eternal life;" 1 John v. 20. "He that believeth on the Son hath the witness in himself;" ver. 10. There is so great a likeness of the holy and heavenly nature, in the saints, to the heavenly life that God hath promised, that makes it the more easily believed.

4. And it exceedingly helpeth our belief of the life that is yet unseen, to find that nature affordeth us undeniable arguments to prove a future happiness and misery, reward and punishment, in the general; yea, and in special, that the love and fruition of God is this reward; and that the effects of his displeasure are this punishment: nothing more clear and certain than that there is a God, (he must be a fool indeed that dare deny it;) Psal. xiv. 1. As also that this God is the Creator of the rational nature, and hath the absolute right of sovereign government; and therefore a rational creature oweth him the most full and absolute obedience, and deserveth punishment if he disobey. And it is most clear that Infinite Goodness should be loved above all finite and imperfect created good: and it is clear that the rational nature is so formed, that, without the hopes and fears of another life, the world neither is nor ever was, nor (by ordinary visible means) can be well governed; (supposing God to work on man according to his nature.) And it is most certain that it consisteth not with infinite wisdom, power, and goodness, to be put to rule the world, in all ages, by fraud and falsehood. And it is certain that heathens do, for the most part, through the world, by the light of nature, acknowledge a life of joy or misery to come; and the most hardened atheists or infidels must confess, that 'for aught they know there may be such a life;' it being impossible they should know or prove the contrary. And it is most certain that the mere probability or possibility of a heaven and hell (being matters of such

unspeakable concernment) should in reason command our utmost diligence to the hazard or loss of the transitory vanities below; and consequently that a holy, diligent preparation for another life, is naturally the duty of the reasonable creature. And it is as sure that God hath not made our nature in vain, nor set us on a life of vain employments, nor made it our business in the world to seek after that which can never be attained.

These things, and much more, do show that nature affordeth us so full a testimony of the life to come that is yet invisible, that it exceedingly helpeth us in believing the supernatural revelation of it, which is more full.

5. And though we have not seen the objects of our faith, yet those that have given us their infallible testimony by infallible means, have seen what they testified. Though "no man hath seen God at any time, yet the only-begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, hath declared him;" John i. 18. "Verily, verily, (saith our Lord,) we speak that we know, and testify that we have seen;" John iii. 11. "He that cometh from heaven is above all, and what he hath seen and heard, that he testifieth;" ver. 31, 32. Christ, that hath told us, saw the things that we have not seen, and you will believe honest men that speak to you of what they were eye-witnesses of. And the disciples saw the person, the transfiguration, and the miracles of Christ. Inasmuch that John thus beginneth his Epistle: "That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the word of life, (for life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and show it to you, that eternal life which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us:) That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you;" 1 John i. 1—3. So Paul, 1 Cor. ix. 1. "Am I not an apostle? Have I not seen Jesus Christ our Lord?" "He was seen of Cephas, then of the twelve: after that he was seen of above five hundred brethren at once, of whom the greater part remain unto this present:" 1 Cor. xv. 5—7. "This great salvation at first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed to us by them that heard him; God also bearing them witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his own will;" Heb. ii. 3, 4. "For we have not followed cunningly-devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eye-witnesses of his majesty; for he received from God the Father honor and glory, when there came such a voice to him, from the excellent glory; This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. And this voice, which came from

heaven, we heard when we were with him in the holy mount;" 2 Pet. i. 16, 17. And therefore when the apostles were commanded by their persecutors not "to speak at all, or teach in the name of Jesus," they answered, "We cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard;" Acts iv. 18, 20. So that much of the objects of our faith, to us invisible, have yet been seen by those that have instrumentally revealed them; and the glory of heaven itself is seen by many millions of souls that are now possessing it. And the tradition of the testimony of the apostles unto us is more full and satisfactory, than the tradition of any laws of the land, or history of the most unquestionable affairs that have been done among the people of the earth, (as I have manifested elsewhere.) So that faith hath the infallible testimony of God, and of them that have seen, and therefore is to us instead of sight.

6. Lastly, even the enemy of faith himself doth against his will confirm our faith, by the violence and rage of malice that he stirreth up in the ungodly against the life of faith and holiness; and by the importunity of his oppositions and temptations, discovering that it is not for nothing that he is so maliciously solicitous, industrious, and violent.

And thus you see how much faith hath, that should fully satisfy a rational man, instead of presence, possession, and sight.

If any shall here say, 'But why would not God let us have a sight of heaven or hell, when he could not but know that it would more generally and certainly have prevailed for the conversion and salvation of the world? Doth he envy us the most effectual means?'

I answer, 1. "Who art thou, O man, that disputest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus?" Must God come down to the bar of man, to render an account of the reason of his works? Why do ye not also ask him a reason of the nature, situation, magnitude, order, influences, &c. of all the stars, and superior orbs, and call him to an account for all his works? When yet there are so many things in your own bodies, of which you little understand the reason. Is it not intolerable impudency, for such worms as we, so low, so dark, to question the eternal God, concerning the reason of his laws and dispensations? Do we not shamefully forget our ignorance and our distance?

2. But if you must have a reason, let this suffice you. It is fit that the government of God be suited to the nature of the reasonable subject. And reason is made to apprehend more than we see, and by reaching beyond sense, to carry us to seek things higher and better than sense can reach. If you would have a man un-

derstand no more than he sees, you would almost equalize a wise man and a fool, and make a man too like a beast. Even in worldly matters, you will venture upon the greatest cost and pains for the things that you see not, nor ever saw. He that hath a journey to go to a place that he never saw, will not think that a sufficient reason to stay at home. The merchant will sail a thousand miles to a land, and for a commodity that he never saw. Must the husbandman see the harvest before he plough his land, and sow his seed? Must the sick man feel that he hath health before he use the means to get it? Must the soldier see that he hath the victory before he fight? You would take such concerns in worldly matters to be the symptoms of distraction. And will you cherish them where they are most pernicious? Hath God made man for any end, or for none? If none, he is made in vain: if for any, no reason can expect that he should see his end before he use the means, and see his home before he begin to travel towards it. When children first go to school, they do not see or enjoy the learning and wisdom which by time and labor they must attain. You will provide for the children which you are like to have before you see them. To look that sight, which is our fruition itself, should go before a holy life, is to expect the end before we will use the necessary means. You see here in the government of the world, that it is things unseen that are the instruments of rule, and motives of obedience. Shall no man be restrained from felony or murders, but he that seeth the assizes or the gallows? It is enough that he foreseeth them, as being made known by the laws.

It would be no discrimination of the good and bad, the wise and foolish, if the reward and punishment must be seen. What thief so mad as to steal at the gallows, or before the judge? The basest habits would be restrained from acting, if the reward and punishment were in sight. The most beastly drunkard would not be drunk; the filthy fornicator would forbear his lust; the malicious enemy of godliness would forbear their calumnies and persecutions, if heaven and hell were open to their sight. No man will play the adulterer in the face of the assembly: the chaste and unchaste seem there alike; and so they would do if they saw the face of the most dreadful God. No thanks to any of you all to be godly if heaven were to be presently seen; or to forbear your sin if you saw hell-fire. God will have a meeter way of trial. You shall believe his promises, if ever you will have the benefit; and believe his threatenings, if ever you will escape the threatened evil.

CHAPTER II.

Some Uses.

Use 1. THIS being the nature and use of Faith, to apprehend things absent as if they were present, and things unseen as if they were visible before our eyes, you may hence understand the nature of Christianity, and what it is to be a true believer. Verily, it is another matter than the dreaming, self-deceiving world imagineth. Hypocrites think that they are Christians indeed, because they have entertained a superficial opinion that there is a Christ, an immortality of souls, a resurrection, a heaven, and a hell; though their lives bear witness, that this is not a living and effectual faith; but it is their sensitive faculties and interest that are predominant, and are the bias of their hearts. Alas! a little observation may tell them, that notwithstanding their most confident pretensions to Christianity, they are utterly unacquainted with the Christian life. Would they live as they do, in worldly cares, and pampering of the flesh, and neglect of God, and the life to come, if they saw the things which they say they do believe? Could they be sensual, ungodly, and secure, if they had a faith that served instead of sight?

Would you know who it is that is the Christian indeed? 1. He is one that liveth (in some measure) as if he saw the Lord; believing in that God that dwelleth in the inaccessible light, that cannot be seen by mortal eyes, he liveth as before his face. He speaks, he prays, he thinks, he deals with men, as if he saw the Lord stand by. No wonder, therefore, if he do it with reverence and holy fear. No wonder if he make lighter of the smiles or frowns of mortal man, than others do that see none higher; and if he observe not the lustre of worldly dignity, or fleshly beauty, wisdom or vain-glory, before the transcendent, incomprehensible Light, to which the sun itself is darkness. When "he awaketh he is still with God;" Psal. cxxxix. 18. "He sets the Lord always before him, because he is at his right hand, he is not moved;" Psal. xvi. 8. And therefore the life of believers is oft called a walking with God, and a walking before God, as Gen. v. 22. 24. vi. 9. xvii. 1. in the case of Enoch, Noah, and Abraham. "All the day doth he wait on God;" Psal. xxv. 5. Imagine yourselves what manner of person he must be that sees the Lord; and conclude that such (in his measure) is the true believer. For "by faith he seeth him that is invisible," (to the eye of sense,) and therefore can forsake the glory and pleasures of the world, and feareth not the wrath of princes, as it is said of Moses; Heb. xi. 27.

2. The believer is one that liveth on a Christ whom he never saw, and trusteth in him, adhereth to him, acknowledgeth his benefits, loveth him, and rejoiceth in him, as if he had seen him with his eyes. This is the faith which Peter calls "more precious than perishing gold;" that maketh us "love him whom we have not seen, and in whom, though now we see him not, yet believing, we rejoice, with unspeakable and glorious joy;" 1 Pet. i. 8. "Christ dwelleth in his heart by faith;" not only by his Spirit, but objectively as our dearest absent friend doth dwell in our estimation and affection; Ephes. iii. 17. O that the miserable infidels of the world had the eyes, the hearts, the experiences, of the true believer! Then they that with Thomas tell those that have seen him, "Except I may see and feel, I will not believe," will be forced to cry out, "My Lord and my God;" John xx. 25, &c.

3. A believer is one that judgeth of the man by his invisible inside, and not by outward appearances, with a fleshly, worldly judgment. He seeth by faith a greater ugliness in sin than in any the most deformed monster. When the unbeliever saith, What harm is it to please my flesh in ease, or pride, or meat and drink, or lustful wantonness? the believer takes it as the question of a fool, that should ask, 'What harm is it to take a drachm of mercury or arsenic?' He seeth the vicious evil, and foreseeeth the consequent penal evil by the eye of faith. And therefore it is that he pitieth the ungodly, when they pity not themselves, and speaks to them oft with a tender heart in compassion of their misery, and perhaps weeps over them (as Paul, Phil. iii. 18, 19.) when he cannot prevail; when they weep not for themselves, but hate his love, and scorn his pity, and bid him keep his lamentations for himself; because they see not what he sees.

He seeth also the inward beauty of the saints, (as it shineth forth in the holiness of their lives,) and through all their sordid poverty and contempt beholdeth the image of God upon them. For he judgeth not of sin or holiness as they now appear to the distracted world; but as they will be judged of at the day which he foreseeeth, when sin will be the shame, and holiness the honored and desired state.

He can see Christ in his poor, despised members, and love God in those that are made as the scorn and offscouring of all things by the malignant, unbelieving world. He admireth the excellency and happiness of those that are made the laughing-stock of the ungodly, and accounteth the saints the most excellent on earth; (Psal. xvi. 2.) and had rather be one of their communion in rags, than sit with princes, that are naked within, and void of the true and durable glory. He judgeth of men as he perceiveth them to have more or less of Christ. The worth of a man is not obvi-

ous to the sense. You see his stature, complexion, and his clothes; but as you see not his learning or skill in any art whatsoever, so you see not his grace and heavenly mind. As the soul itself, so the sinful deformity, and the holy beauty of it, are to us invisible, and perceived only by their fruits, and by the eye of faith, which seeth things as God reveals them: and therefore in the eyes of a true believer, "a vile person is contemned; but he honoreth those that fear the Lord;" Psal. xv. 4.

4. A true believer doth seek a happiness which he never saw, and that with greater estimation and resolution than he seeks the most excellent things that he hath seen. In all his prayers, his labors and his sufferings, it is an unseen glory that he seeks. He seeth not the glory of God, nor the glorified Redeemer, nor the world of angels and perfected spirits of the just; but he knoweth, by faith, that such a God, such a glory, such a world as this there is, as certain as if his eyes had seen it; and therefore he provides, he lives, he hopes, he waits for this unseen state of spiritual bliss, contemning all the wealth and glory that sight can reach in comparison thereof. He believes what he shall see, and therefore strives that he may see it. It is something above the sun, and all that mortal eyes can see, which is the end, the hope, the portion of a believer, without which all is nothing to him, and for which he trades and travels here, as worldlings do for worldly things; Matt. vi. 20, 21. Col. iii. 1. Phil. iii. 20.

5. A true believer doth all his life prepare for a day that is yet to come, and for an account of all the passages of his life, though he hath nothing but the word of God to assure him of it; and therefore he lives as one that is hastening to the presence of his Judge; and he contriveth his affairs, and disposeth of his worldly riches, as one that looks to hear of it again, and as one that remembereth the "Judge is at the door;" James v. 9. He rather asketh, 'What life, what words, what actions, what way of using my estate and interest, will be sweetest to me in the review, and will be best at last, when I must accordingly receive my doom?' than 'What is most pleasant to my flesh, and what will ingratiate me most with men? and what will accommodate me best at present, and set me highest in the world?' And therefore it is that he pitieth the ungodly, even in the height of their prosperity; and is so earnest (though it offend them) to procure their recovery, as knowing that how secure soever they are now, they "must give an account to him that is ready to judge the quick and the dead;" (1 Pet. iv. 5.) and that then the case will be altered with the presumptuous world.

6. Lastly, a true believer is careful to prevent a threatened misery

which he never felt; and is awakened by holy fear to fly from the wrath to come, and is industrious to escape that place of torment which he never saw, as if he had seen it with his eyes. When he heareth but the "sound of the trumpet, he takes warning that he may save his soul;" Ezek. xxxiii. 4. The evils that are here felt and seen are not so dreadful to him as those he never saw or felt. He is not so careful and resolute, to avoid the ruin of his estate or name, or to avoid the plague, or sword, or famine, or the scorching flames, or death, or torments, as he is to avoid the endless torments which are threatened by the righteous God. It is a greater misery, in his esteem, to be really undone forever than seemingly only for a time, and to be cast off by God than by all the world; and to lie in hell than to suffer any temporal calamity. And therefore he fears it more, and doth more to avoid it; and is more cast down by the fears of God's displeasure than by the feelings of these present sufferings. As Noah did for his preservation from the threatened deluge, so doth the true believer for his preservation from everlasting wrath. "By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark, to the saving of his house, by the which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith;" Heb. xi. 7. God first giveth warning of the flood; Noah believeth it; not with a lifeless, but a working faith, that first moved in him a self-preserving fear. This fear moved Noah to obey the Lord in the use of means, and to prepare the ark; and all this was to save himself and his house from a flood that was as yet unseen, and of which in nature there was no appearance. Thus doth God warn the sinful world of the day of judgment and the fire that is unquenchable; and true believers take his warning, and believing that which they cannot see, by fear they are moved to fly to Christ, and use his means to escape the threatened calamity. By this they become the "heirs of that righteousness which is by faith," and condemn the unbelieving, careless world, that take not the warning and use not the remedy.

By this time you may see that the life of faith is quite another thing than the lifeless opinion of multitudes that call themselves believers. To say, 'I believe there is a God, a Christ, a heaven, a hell,' is as easy as it is common; but the faith of the ungodly is but an ineffectual dream. To dream that you are fighting, wins no victories. To dream that you are eating, gets no strength. To dream that you are running, rides no ground. To dream that you are ploughing, or sowing, or reaping, procureth but a fruitless harvest. And to dream that you are princes, may consist with beggary. If you do any more than dream of heaven and hell, how is

it that you stir not, and make it not appear, by the diligence of your lives, and the fervor of your duties, and the seriousness of your endeavors, that such wonderful, inexpressible, overpowering things, are indeed the matters of your belief? As you love your souls, take heed lest you take an image of faith to be the thing itself. Faith sets on work the powers of the soul, for the obtaining of that joy and the escaping of that misery which you believe. But the image of faith in self-deceivers neither warms nor works; it conquereth not difficulties; it stirs not up to faithful duty. It is blind, and therefore seeth not God; and how then should he be feared and loved? It seeth not hell, and therefore the senseless soul goes on as fearlessly and merrily to the unquenchable fire as if he were in the safest way. This image of faith annihilateth the most potent objects, as to any due impression on the soul. God is as no God, and heaven as no heaven to these imaginary Christians. If a prince be in the room, an image reverenceth him not. If music and feasting be there, an image finds no pleasure in them. If fire and sword be there, an image fears them not. You may perceive by the senseless, neglectful carriage of ungodly men, that they see not by faith the God that they should love and fear; the heaven that they should seek and wait for, or the hell that they should with all possible care avoid. He is indeed the true believer that (allowing the difference of degrees) doth pray as if he saw the Lord; and speak and live as always in his presence; and redeem his time as if he were to die to-morrow, or as one that seeth death approach, and ready to lay hands upon him; that begs and cries to God in prayer, as one that foreseeth the day of judgment, and the endless joy or misery that followeth; that bestirreth him for everlasting life, as one that seeth heaven and hell by the eye of faith. Faith is a serious apprehension, and causeth a serious conversation; for it is instead of sight and presence.

From all this you may easily and certainly infer, 1. That true faith is a jewel, rare and precious; and not so common as nominal, careless Christians think. 'What,' say they, 'are we not all believers? Will you make infidels of all that are not saints? Are none Christians but those that live so strictly?' *Ans.* I know they are not infidels by profession; but what they are indeed, and what God will take them for, you may soon perceive, by comparing the description of faith with the inscription legible on their lives. It is common to say, 'I do believe;' but is it common to find men pray and live as those that do believe indeed? It is both in works of charity and of piety, that a living faith will show itself. I will not therefore contend about the name. If you are ungodly, unjust, or uncharitable, and yet will call yourselves believers, you may keep the name, and see whether it will save you. Have you

forgotten how this case is determined by the Holy Ghost himself? "What doth it profit, my brethren, if a man say, he hath faith and hath not works? Can faith save him? Faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone. Thou believest that there is one God: thou dost well: the devils also believe and tremble;" James ii. 14. &c. If such a belief be it that thou gloryest in, it is not denied thee. "But wilt thou know, O vain man! that faith without works is dead?" &c. Is there life where there is no motion? Had you that faith that is instead of sight, it would make you more solicitous for the things unseen than you are for the visible trifles of this world.

2. And hence you may observe that most true believers are weak in faith. Alas! how far do we all fall short of the love, and zeal, and care, and diligence, which we should have if we had but once beheld the things which we do believe! Alas! how dead are our affections! how flat are our duties! how cold and how slow are our endeavors! how unprofitable are our lives, in comparison of what one hour's sight of heaven and hell would make them be! O, what a comfortable converse would it be, if I might but join in prayer, praise and holy conference one day or hour, with a person that had seen the Lord, and been in heaven, and borne a part in the angelic praises! Were our congregations composed of such persons, what manner of worship would they perform to God! How unlike would their heavenly, ravishing expressions be to these our sleepy, heartless duties! Were heaven open to the view of all this congregation while I am speaking to you, or when we are speaking in prayer and praise to God, imagine yourselves what a change it would make upon the best of us in our services! What apprehensions, what affections, what resolutions it would raise; and what a posture it would cast us all into! And do we not all profess to believe these things, as revealed from heaven by the infallible God? Do we not say, that such a divine revelation is as sure as if the things were in themselves laid open to our sight? Why, then, are we no more affected with them? Why are we no more transported by them? Why do they no more command our souls, and stir up our faculties to the most vigorous and lively exercise? and call them off from things that are not to us considerable, nor fit to have one glance of the eye of our observation, nor a regardful thought, nor the least affection, unless as they subserve these greater things? When you observe how much in yourselves and others, the frame of your souls in holy duty, and the tenor of your lives towards God and man do differ from what they would be, if you had seen the things that you believe, let it mind you of the great imperfection of faith, and humble us all in the sense of our imbecility. For though I know that the most perfect faith is not apt to raise such high affections in de-

gree as shall be raised by the beatifical vision in the glorified, and as present intuition now would raise if we could attain it; yet seeing faith hath as sure an object and revelation as sight itself, though the manner of apprehension be less affecting, it should do much more with us than it doth, and bring us nearer to such affections and resolutions as sight would cause.

Use 2. If faith be given us to make things to come as if they were at hand, and things unseen as if we saw them, you may see from hence, 1. The reason of that holy seriousness of believers, which the ungodly want. 2. And the reason why the ungodly want it. 3. And why they wonder at, and distaste and deride this serious diligence of the saints.

1. Would you make it any matter of wonder, for men to be more careful of their souls, more fervent in their requests to God, more fearful of offending him, and more laborious in all holy preparation for eternal life, than the holiest and most precise person that you know in all the world, if so be that heaven and hell were seen to them? Would you not rather wonder at the dullness, and coldness, and negligence of the best, and that they are not far more holy and diligent than they are, if you and they did see these things? Why, then, do you not cease your wondering at their diligence? Do you not know that they are men that have seen the Lord whom they daily serve; and seen the glory which they daily seek; and seen the place of torments which they fly from? By faith in the glass of divine revelation they have seen them.

2. And the reason why the careless world are not as diligent and holy as believers, is, because they have not this eye of faith, and never saw those powerful objects that believers see. Had you their eyes, you would have their hearts and lives. O that the Lord would but illuminate you, and give you such a sight of the things unseen as every true believer hath! What a happy change would it make upon you! Then, instead of your deriding or opposing it, we should have your company in the holy path. You would then be such yourselves as you now deride. If you saw what they see, you would do as they do. When the heavenly light had appeared unto Saul, he ceaseth persecuting, and inquires what Christ would have him to do, that he might be such an one as he had persecuted. And when the scales fell from his eyes, he falls to prayer, and gets among the believers whom he had persecuted, and laboreth and suffereth more than they.

But till this light appear to your darkened souls, you cannot see the reasons of a holy, heavenly life. And therefore you will think it hypocrisy, or pride, or fancy, and imagination, or the foolishness of crack-brained, self-conceited men. If you see a man do reverence to a prince, and the prince himself were invisible to you,

would you not take him for a madman ; and say that he cringed to the stools or chairs, or bowed to a post, or complimented with his shadow? If you saw a man's action in eating and drinking, and see not the meat and drink itself, would you not think him mad? If you heard men laugh, and hear not so much as the voice of him that gives the jest, would you not imagine them to be brain-sick? If you see men dance, and hear not the music ; if you see a laborer threshing, or reaping, or mowing, and see no corn or grass before him ; if you see a soldier fighting for his life, and see no enemy that he spends his strokes upon : will you not take all these for men distracted? Why, this is the case between you and the true believers. You see them reverently worship God, but you see not the majesty which they worship, as they do. You see them as busy for the saving of their souls as if a hundred lives lay on it ; but you see not the hell from which they fly, nor the heaven they seek ; and therefore you marvel why they make so much ado about the matters of their salvation ; and why they cannot do as others, and make as light of Christ and heaven as they that desire to be excused, and think they have more needful things to mind. But did you see with the eyes of a true believer, and were the amazing things that God hath revealed to us but open to your sight, how quickly would you be satisfied, and sooner mock at the diligence of a drowning man, that is striving for his life, or at the labor of the city when they are busily quenching the flames in their habitations, than mock at them that are striving for the everlasting life, and praying and laboring against the ever-burning flames.

How soon would you turn your admiration against the stupidity of the careless world, and wonder more that ever men that hear the Scriptures, and see with their eyes the works of God, can make so light of matters of such unspeakable, eternal consequence. Did you but see heaven and hell, it would amaze you to think that ever many, yea, so many and so seeming wise, should willfully run into everlasting fire, and sell their souls at so low a rate, as if it were as easy to be in hell as in an alehouse, and heaven were no better than a beastly lust. O, then, with what astonishment would you think, 'Is this the fire that sinners do so little fear? Is this the glory that is so neglected?' You would then see that the madness of the ungodly is the wonder.

Use 3. By this time I should think that some of your own consciences have prevented me, in the use of examination, which I am next to call you to. I hope while I have been holding you the glass, you have not turned away your faces, nor shut your eyes ; but that you have been judging yourselves by the light which hath been set up before you. Have not some of your consciences said

by this time, 'If this be the nature and use of faith, to make things unseen, as if we saw them, what a desolate case then is my soul in! How void of faith! How full of infidelity! How far from the truth and power of Christianity! How dangerously have I long deceived myself in calling myself a true Christian, and pretending to be a true believer; when I never knew the life of faith, but took a dead opinion, bred only by education, and the custom of the country instead of it: little did I think that I had been an infidel at the heart, while I so confidently laid claim to the name of a believer! Alas! how far have I been from living as one that seeth the things that he professeth to believe!' If some of your consciences be not thus convinced, and perceive not yet your want of faith, I fear it is because they are seared or asleep.

But if yet conscience have not begun to plead this cause against you, let me begin to plead it with your consciences. Are you believers? Do you live the life of faith, or not? Do you live upon things that are unseen, or upon the present visible baits of sensuality? That you may not turn away your ears, or hear me with a sluggish, senseless mind, let me tell you, first, how nearly it concerneth you to get this question soundly answered; and then, that you may not be deceived, let me help you towards the true resolution.

1. And for the first, you may perceive, by what is said, that saving faith is not so common as those that know not the nature of it do imagine. "All men have not faith;" 2 Thess. iii. 2. O, what abundance do deceive themselves with names, and shows, and a dead opinion, and customary religion, and take these for the life of faith!

2. Till you have this faith, you have no special interest in Christ. It is only believers that are united to him, and are his living members. And it is by faith that he dwelleth in our hearts, and that we live in him; Ephes. iii. 17. Gal. ii. 20. In vain do you boast of Christ, if you are not true believers. You have no part or portion in him. None of his special benefits are yours, till you have this living, working faith.

3. You are still in the state of enmity to God, and unreconciled to him while you are unbelievers. For you can have no peace with God, nor access unto his favor, but by Christ; Rom. v. 1—4. Ephes. ii. 14, 15, 17. And therefore you must come by faith to Christ, before you can come by Christ unto the Father, as those that have a special interest in his love.

4. Till you have this faith, you are under the guilt and load of all your sins, and under the curse and condemnation of the law; for there is no justification or forgiveness but by faith; Acts xxvi 18. Rom. iv. v. &c.

5. Till you have this sound belief of things unseen, you will be carnal-minded, and have a carnal end to all your actions, which will make those to be evil, that, materially, are good, and those to be fleshly, that, materially, are holy. "Without faith, it is impossible to please God;" Rom. viii. 5. 8, 9. Prov. xxviii. 9. Heb. xi. 6.

6. Lastly, till you have this living faith, you have no right to heaven, nor could be saved if you die this hour. "Whoever believeth shall not perish, but have everlasting life. He that believeth on him is not condemned; but he that believeth not is condemned already. He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life; and he that believeth not the Son, shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him;" John iii. 16. 18. 36.

You see, if you love yourselves, it concerneth you to try whether you are true believers: unless you take it for an indifferent thing, whether you live forever in heaven or hell, it is best for you to put the question close to your consciences betimes. Have you that faith that serves instead of sight? Do you carry within you "the evidence of things unseen, and the substance of the things" which you say you "hope for?" Did you know in what manner this question must be put and determined at judgment, and how all your comfort will then depend upon the answer, and how near that day is, when you must all be sentenced to heaven or hell, as you are found to be believers or unbelievers, it would make you hearken to my counsel, and presently try whether you have a saving faith.

2. But lest you be deceived in your trial, and lest you mistake me, as if I tried the weak by the measure of the strong, and laid all your comfort upon such strong affections and high degrees as sight itself would work within you, I shall briefly tell you how you may know whether you have any faith that is true and saving, though in the least degree. Though none of us are affected to that height as we should be if we had the sight of all that we do believe, yet all that have any saving belief of invisible things will have these four signs of faith within them.

1. A sound belief of things unseen will cause a practical estimation of them, and that above all earthly things. A glimpse of the heavenly glory, as in a glass, will cause the soul deliberately to say, 'This is the chief desirable felicity; this is the crown, the pearl, the treasure; nothing but this can serve my turn.' It will debase the greatest pleasures, or riches, or honors of the world in your esteem. How contemptible will they seem, while you see God stand by, and heaven, as it were, set open to your view! You will see there is little cause to envy the prosperous servants of the world; you will pity them, as miserable in their mirth, and bound

in the fetters of their folly and concupiscence, and as strangers to all solid joy and honor. You will be moved with some compassion to them in their misery, when they are braving it among men, and domineering for a little while; and you will think, Alas! poor man! is this all thy glory? Hast thou no better wealth, no higher honor, no sweeter pleasures than these husks? With such a practical judgment as you value gold above dirt, and jewels above common stones, you will value heaven above all the riches and pleasures of this world, if you have indeed a living, saving faith; Phil. iii. 7—9.

2. A sound belief of the things unseen will habitually incline your wills to embrace them, with consent, and complacency, and resolution, above and against those worldly things that would be set above them and preferred before them. If you are true believers, you have made your choice, you have fixed your hopes, you have taken up your resolutions, that God must be your portion, or you can have none that is worth the having; that Christ must be your Savior, or you cannot be saved; and, therefore, you are at a point with all things else. They may be your helps, but not your happiness. You are resolved on what rock to build, and where to cast anchor, and at what port and prize your life shall aim. You are resolved what to seek, and trust to; God or none; heaven or nothing; Christ or none, is the voice of your rooted, stable resolutions. Though you are full of fears, sometimes, whether you shall be accepted, and have a part in Christ, or no; and whether ever you shall attain the glory which you aim at; yet you are off all other hopes; having seen an end of all perfections, and read vanity and vexation written upon all creatures, even on the most flattering state on earth, and are unchangeably resolved not to change your Master, and your hopes, and your holy course, for any other life or hopes. Whatever come of it, you are resolved that here you will venture all; knowing that you have no other game to play, at which you are not sure to lose, and that you can lay out your love, and care, and labor on nothing else that will answer your expectations; nor make any other bargain whatsoever, but what you are sure to be utterly undone by; Psal. lxxiii. 25. iv. 6, 7. Matt. vi. 20, 21. xiii. 45, 46. Luke xviii. 33.

3. A sound belief of things invisible will be so far an effectual spring of a holy life, as that you will "seek first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness;" (Matt. vi. 33.) and not in your resolutions only, but in your practices, the bent of your lives will be for God, and your invisible felicity. It is not possible that you should see, by faith, the wonders of the world to come, and yet prefer this world before it. A dead, opinionative belief may stand with a worldly, fleshly life; but a working faith will make you stir,

and make the things of God your business. And the labor and industry of your lives will show whether you soundly believe the things unseen.

4. If you savingly believe the invisible things, you will purchase them at any rate, and hold them faster than your worldly accommodations; and will suffer the loss of all things visible, rather than you will cast away your hopes of the glory, which you never saw. A human faith and bare opinion will not hold fast when trial comes. For such men take heaven but for a reserve, because they must leave earth against their wills, and are loath to go to hell. But they are resolved to hold the world as long as they can, because their faith apprehendeth no such satisfying certainty of the things unseen as will encourage them to let go all that they see, and have in sensible possession. But the weakest faith that is true and saving, doth habitually dispose the soul to let go all the hopes and happiness of this world, when they are inconsistent with our spiritual hopes and happiness; Luke xiv. 33.

And now I have gone before you with the light, and showed you what a believer is, will you presently consider how far your hearts and lives agree to this description? To know whether you live by faith or not, is consequently to know whether God or the world be your portion and felicity, and so whether you are the heirs of heaven or hell. And is not this a question that you are most nearly concerned in? O, therefore, for your souls' sakes, and as ever you love your everlasting peace, "Examine yourselves, whether you are in the faith or not. Know you not that Christ is in you, (by faith,) except you be reprobates?" 2 Cor. xiii. 5. Will you hearken now as long to your consciences as you have done to me? As you have heard me telling you what is the nature of a living, saving faith, will you hearken to your consciences, while they impartially tell you whether you have this life of faith or not? It may be known, if you are willing, and diligent, and impartial; if you search on purpose, as men that would know whether they are alive or dead, and whether they shall live or die forever; and not as men that would be flattered and deceived, and are resolved to think well of their state, be it true or false.

Let conscience tell you. What eyes do you see by, for the conduct of the chief employment of your lives? Is it by the eye of sense or faith? I take it for granted that it is by the eye of reason. But is it by reason corrupted and biased by sense, or is it by reason elevated by faith? What country is it that your hearts converse in? Is it in heaven or earth? What company is it that you solace yourselves with? Is it with angels and saints? Do you walk with them in the Spirit, and join your echoes to their triumphant praises, and say, Amen, when by faith you hear them

ascribing honor, and praise, and glory to the Ancient of Days, the Omnipotent Jehovah, that is, and that was, and is to come? Do you fetch your joys from heaven or earth? From things unseen or seen? Things future or present? Things hoped for or things possessed? What garden yieldeth you your sweetest flowers? Whence is the food that your hopes and comforts live upon? Whence are the spirits and cordials that revive you, when a frowning world doth cast you into a fainting fit or swoon? Where is it that you repose your souls for rest, when sin or suffering have made you weary? Deal truly; is it in heaven or earth? Which world do you take for your pilgrimage, and which for your home? I do not ask you where you are, but where you dwell? Not where are your persons, but where are your hearts? In a word, are you in good earnest, when you say, you believe a heaven and hell? And do you think, and speak, and pray, and live, as those that do indeed believe it? Do you spend your time, and choose your condition of life, and dispose of your affairs, and answer temptations to worldly things, as those that are serious in their belief? Speak out: do you live the life of faith upon things unseen? or the life of sense on the things that you behold? Deal truly; for your endless joy or sorrow doth much depend on it. The life of faith is the certain passage to the life of glory. The fleshly life on things here seen, is the certain way to endless misery. "If ye live after the flesh, ye shall die; but if ye, by the Spirit, do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live;" Rom. viii. 13. "Be not deceived; God is not mocked; for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to the flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap everlasting life;" Gal. vi. 7, 8. If you would know where you must live forever, know how, and for what, and upon what it is that you live here.

Use 4. Having inquired whether you are believers, I am next to ask you what you will be for the time to come. Will you live upon things seen or unseen? Will you arrogate the name and honor of being Christians? Will you bethink you what Christianity is? And will you be indeed what you say you are, and would be thought to be? O, that you would give credit to the word of God! that the God of heaven might be but heartily believed by you! and that you would but take his word to be as sure as sense! and what he hath told you is, or will be, to be as certain as if you saw it with your eyes! O, what manner of persons would you then be! How carefully and fruitfully would you speak and live! How impossible were it then that you should be careless and profane! And here, that I may, by seriousness, bring you to be serious, in so serious a business, I shall first put a few suppositions to you,

about the invisible objects of faith, and then I shall put some applicatory questions to you, concerning your own resolutions and practice thereupon.

1. Suppose you saw the Lord in glory continually before you, when you are hearing, praying, talking, jesting, eating, drinking, and when you are tempted to any willful sin. Suppose you saw the Lord stand over you, as verily as you see a man; (as you might do if your eyes could see him; for it is most certain that he is still present with you;) suppose you saw but such a glimpse of his back parts as Moses did, (Exod. xxxiv.) when God put him into a cleft of the rock, and covered him while he passed by, (Exod. xxxiii. 23.) when the face of Moses did shine with the sight, that he was fain to veil it from the people; Exod. xxxiv. 33—35. Or if you had seen but what the prophet saw, when he “beheld the Lord upon a throne, high and lifted up,” &c. and “heard the seraphim cry, Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory.” When he said, “Woe is me, for I am undone, because I am a man of unclean lips, and dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts;” Isa. vi. 1—6. Or if you had seen but what Job saw, when he said, “I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear; but now mine eye seeth thee; wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes;” Job xlii. 5, 6. What course would you take, what manner of persons would you be, after such a sight as this? If you had seen but Christ appearing in his glory, as the disciples on the holy mount; Matt. xvii. Or as Paul saw him at his conversion, when he was smitten to the earth; Acts ix. Or as John saw him, (Rev. i. 13.) where he saith, “He was clothed with a garment down to the foot, and girt with a golden girdle; his head and his hairs were white like wool or snow, and his eyes were as a flame of fire, and his feet like unto fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace, and his voice as the sound of many waters; and he had in his right hand seven stars, and out of his mouth went a sharp two-edged sword, and his countenance was as the sun shining in his strength. And when I saw him, I fell at his feet, as dead; and he laid his right hand upon me, saying unto me, Fear not; I am the first and the last; I am he that liveth and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death.” What do you think you should be and do, if you had seen but such a sight as this? Would you be godly or ungodly after it? As sure as you live, and see one another, God always seeth you. He seeth your secret filthiness, and deceit, and malice, which you think is hid: he seeth you in the dark; the locking of your doors, the drawing of your curtains, the setting of the sun, or the putting out of the

candle, doth hide nothing from him that is omniscient. "Understand, O ye brutish among the people! and ye fools, when will ye be wise? He that planted the ear, shall he not hear? He that formed the eye, shall he not see?" Psal. xciv. 8, 9. The lust, and filthiness, and covetousness, and envy, and vanity of your very thoughts are as open to his view as the sun at noon. And, therefore, you may well suppose him present that cannot be absent; and you may suppose you saw him that still seeth you, and whom you must see. O, what a change a glimpse of the glory of his majesty would make in this assembly! O, what amazements, what passionate workings of soul would it excite! Were it but an angel that did thus appear to you, what manner of hearers would you be! how serious! how affectionate! how sensible! And yet are you believers, and have none of this, when faith makes unseen things to be as seen? If thou have faith indeed, thou seest him that is invisible; thou speakest to him; thou hearest him in his word; thou seest him in his works; thou walkest with him; he is the life of thy comforts, thy converse and thy life.

2. Suppose you had seen the matters revealed in the gospel to your faith, as to what is past and done already. If you had seen the deluge, and the ark, and preservation of one righteous family; the burning of Sodom and Gomorrah with fire from heaven; and the saving of Lot, whose righteous soul was grieved at their sins, and hunted after as a prey to their ungodly rage, because he would have hindered them from transgressing. Suppose you had seen the opening of the Red sea, the passage of the Israelites, the drowning of Pharaoh and his Egyptians; the manna and the quails that fell from heaven, the flaming mount, with the terrible thunder, when God delivered the law to Moses; what manner of people would you have been? What lives would you have led after such sights as all or any of these? Suppose you had seen Christ in his state of incarnation, in his examples of lowliness, meekness, contempt of all the glory and vanities of this world, and had heard him speak his heavenly doctrine with power and authority, as never man spake! Suppose you had seen him heal the blind, the lame, the sick, and raise the dead; and seen him, after all this, made the scorn of sinners, buffeted, spit upon, when they had crowned him with thorns, and arrayed him gorgeously in scorn; and then nailed, between malefactors, on a cross, and pierced, and die a shameful death, and this for such as you and I! Suppose you had seen the sun darkened without any eclipse; the veil of the temple rent; the earth tremble; the angels terrifying the keepers, and Christ rise again! Suppose you had been among the disciples when he appeared in the midst of them, and with Thomas had put

your fingers into his wounded side ; and had seen him walking on the waters, and at last seen him ascending up to heaven. Suppose you had seen when the Holy Ghost came down on the disciples in the similitude of cloven tongues, and had heard them speak in the various languages of the nations, and seen the variety of miracles by which they convinced the unbelieving world ; what persons would you have been ? What lives would you have led, if you had been eye-witnesses of all these things ? And do you not profess to believe all this, and that these things are as certain truths as if you had seen them ? Why, then, doth not your belief affect you, or command you more ? Why doth it not do what sight would do, in some good measure, if it were but a lively, saving faith indeed, that serveth instead of sense ? Yea, I must tell you, faith must do more with you in this case than the sight of Christ alone could do, or the sight of his miracles did on most. For many that saw him, and saw his works, and heard his word, yet perished in their unbelief.

3. Suppose you saw the everlasting glory which Christ hath purchased and prepared for his saints ; that you had been with Paul, rapt up into the third heavens, and seen the things that are unutterable ; would you not, after that, have rather lived like Paul, and undergone his sufferings and contempt, than to have lived like the brain-sick, brutish world ? If you had seen what Stephen saw before his death, "the glory of God, and Christ standing at his right hand," (Acts vii. 55, 56 ;) if you had seen the thousands and millions of holy, glorious spirits, that are continually attending the Majesty of the Lord ; if you had seen the glorified spirits of the just, that were once in flesh, despised by the blind, ungodly world, while they waited on God in faith, and holiness, and hope, for that blessed crown which now they wear ; if you had felt one moment of their joys ; if you had seen them shine as the sun in glory, and made like unto the angels of God ; if you had heard them sing the song of the Lamb, and the joyful hallelujahs, and praise to their eternal King, what would you be, and what would you resolve on, after such a sight as this ? If the rich man (Luke xvi.) had seen Lazarus in Abraham's bosom, in the midst of his bravery, and honor, and feasting, and other sensual delights, as afterwards he saw it, when he was tormented in the flames of hell, do you think such a sight would not have cooled his mirth and jollity, and helped him to understand the nature and value of his earthly felicity ; and have proved a more effectual argument than a despised preacher's words ? At least to have brought him to a freer exercise of his reason, in a sober consideration of his state and ways ? Had you seen one hour what Abraham, David,

Paul, and all the saints now see, while sin and flesh doth keep us here in the dark, what work do you think yourselves it would make upon your hearts and lives?

4. Suppose you saw the face of death, and that you were now lying under the power of some mortal sickness, physicians having forsaken you, and said, 'There is no hope;' your friends weeping over you, and preparing your winding-sheet and coffin, digging your graves, and casting up the skulls, and bones, and earth, that must again be cast in, to be your covering and company. Suppose you saw a messenger from God to tell you that you must die to-morrow; or heard but what one of your predecessors heard; "Thou fool, this night shall thy soul be required of thee: then, whose shall these things be that thou hast provided?" Luke xii. 20. How would such a message work with you? Would it leave you as you are? If you heard a voice from God this night in your chamber in the dark, telling you that this is the last night that you shall live on earth, and before to-morrow your souls must be in another world, and come before the dreadful God, what would be the effect of such a message? And do you not verily believe that all this will very shortly be? Nay, do you not know, without believing, that you must die, and leave your worldly glory? And that all your pleasures and contents on earth will be as if they had never been (and much worse?) 'O, wonderful! that a change so sure, so great, so near, should no more affect you, and no more be forethought on, and no more prepared for! and that you be not awakened by so full and certain a foreknowledge, to be in good sadness for eternal life, as you seem to be when death is at hand!

5. Suppose you saw the great and dreadful day of judgment, as it is described by Christ himself in Matt. xxv. "When the Son of Man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory; and before him shall be gathered all nations; and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats; and he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left;" ver. 31—33., and shall sentence the righteous to eternal life, and the rest into everlasting punishment: if you did now behold the glory and terror of that great appearance, how the saints will be magnified and rejoice, and be justified against all the accusations of Satan, and calumnies of wicked men; and how the ungodly then would fain deny the words and deeds that now they glory in; and what horror and confusion will then overwhelm those wretched souls, that now outface the messengers of the Lord! Had you seen them trembling before the Lord that now are braving it out in the pride and arrogance of their hearts; had you heard how then they will change their tune, and wish they had

never known their sins, and wish they had lived in greater holiness than those whom they derided for it; what would you say, and do, and be, after such an amazing sight as this? Would you sport it out in sin, as you have done? Would you take no better care for your salvation? If you had seen those sayings of the Holy Ghost fulfilled, "When the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ; who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power;" (Jude 14, 15. 2 Thess. i. 7—9.) what mind do you think you should be of? What course would you take, if you had but seen this dreadful day? Could you go on to think, and speak, and live as sensually, stupidly and negligently as now you do? "The day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat; the earth, also, and the works that are therein, shall be burnt up;" 2 Pet. iii. 10—12. Is it possible soundly to believe such a day, so sure, so near, and no more regard it, nor make ready for it, than the careless and ungodly do?

6. Suppose, at that day, you had heard the devil accusing you of all the sins that you have committed, and set them out in the most odious aggravations, and call for justice against you to your Judge: if you heard him pleading all those sins against you that now he daily tempts you to commit, and now maketh you believe are harmless, or small, inconsiderable things: if you heard him saying, 'At such a time this sinner refused grace, neglected Christ, despised heaven, and preferred earth; at such a time he derided godliness, and made a mock of the holy word and counsels of the Lord; at such a time he profaned the name of God; he coveted his neighbor's wealth; he cherished thoughts of envy, or of lust; he was drunk, or gluttonous, or committed fornication, and he was never thoroughly converted by renewing grace; and, therefore, he is an heir of hell, and belongs to me; I ruled him, and I must have him;' what would you think of a life of sin, if once you had heard such accusations as these? How would you deal by the next temptation, if you had heard what use the tempter will hereafter make of all your sins?

7. What if you had seen the damned in their misery, and heard them cry out of the folly of their impenitent, careless lives; and wishing, as Dives, (Luke xvi.) that their friends on earth might have "one sent from the dead, to warn them, that they come not to that place of torment;" (I speak to men that say they are believers;) what would you do upon such a sight? if you had heard them there torment themselves in the remembrance of the

time they lost, the mercy they neglected, the grace resisted, and wish it were all to do again, and that they might once more be tried with another life? If you saw how the world is altered with those that once were as proud and confident as others, what do you think such a sight would do with you? And why, then, doth the believing of it do no more, when the thing is certain?

8. Once more:—suppose that, in your temptations, you saw the tempter appearing to you, and pleading with you, as he doth by his inward suggestions, or by the mouths of his instruments. If you saw him, and heard him hissing you on to sin, persuading you to gluttony, drunkenness, or uncleanness; if the devil appeared to you, and led you to the place of lust, and offered you the harlot, or the cup of excess, and urged you to swear, or curse, or rail, or scorn at a holy life; would not the sight of the angel mar his game, and cool your courage, and spoil your sport, and turn your stomachs? Would you be drunk, or filthy, if you saw him stand by you? Think on it the next time you are tempted. Stout men have been appalled by such a sight. And do you not believe that it is he indeed that tempteth you? As sure as if your eyes beheld him, it is he that prompteth men to jeer at godliness, and puts your wanton, ribald speeches, and oaths, and curses into your mouths: he is the tutor of the enemies of grace, that teacheth them ‘*doctè delirare, ingeniosè insanire,*’ ingeniously to quarrel with the way of life, and learnedly to confute the arguments that would have saved them; and subtly to dispute themselves out of the hands of mercy, and gallantly to scorn to stoop to Christ, till there be no remedy; and with plausible eloquence to commend the plague and sickness of their souls; and irrefragably maintain it, that the way to hell will lead to heaven; and to justify the sins that will condemn them; and honorably and triumphantly to overcome their friends, and serve the devil in mood and figure, and valiantly to cast themselves into hell, in despite of all the laws and reproofs of God or man that would have hindered them. It being most certain that this is the devil’s work, and you durst not do it if he moved you to it with open face, how dare you do it when faith would assure you, that it is as verily he as if you saw him?

More distinctly, answer these following questions, upon the foregoing suppositions:—

Quest. 1. If you saw but what you say you do believe, would you not be convinced that the most pleasant, gainful sin is worse than madness? And would you not spit at the very name of it, and openly cry out of your open folly, and beg for prayers, and love reprovers, and resolve to turn without delay?

Quest. 2. What would you think of the most serious, holy life,

if you had seen the things you say you do believe? Would you ever again reproach it as preciseness, or count it more ado than needs, and think your time were better spent in playing than in praying; in drinking, and sports, and filthy lusts, than in the holy services of the Lord? Would you think, then, that one day in seven were too much for the work for which you live; and that an hour on this holy day were enough to be spent in instructing you for eternity? Or would you not believe that he is the blessed man, whose delight is in the law of God, and meditateth in it day and night? Could you plead for sensuality, or ungodly negligence, or open your mouths against the most serious holiness of life, if heaven and hell stood open to your view?

Quest. 3. If you saw but what you say you do believe, would you ever again be offended with the ministers of Christ for the plainest reproofs, and closest exhortations, and strictest precepts and discipline, that now are disrelished so much? Or, rather, would you not desire them to help you presently to try your state, and to search you to the quick, and to be more solicitous to save you than to please you? The patient, that will take no bitter medicine in time, when he sees he must die, would then take any thing. When you see the things that now you hear of, then you would do any thing. O, then, might you have these days again, sermons would not be too plain or long; in season and out of season would then be allowed of. Then you would understand what moved ministers to be so importunate with you for conversion, and whether trifling or serious preaching was the best.

Quest. 4. Had you seen the things that you say you do believe, what effect would sermons have upon you, after such a sight as this? O, what a change it would make upon our preaching, and your hearing, if we saw the things that we speak and hear of. How fervently should we importune you in the name of Christ! How attentively would you hear, and carefully consider and obey! We should then have no such sleepy preaching and hearing as now we have. Could I but show to all this congregation, while I am preaching, the invisible world of which we preach, and did you hear with heaven and hell in your eyesight, how confident should I be (though not of the saving change of all) that I should, this hour, teach you to plead for sin, and against a holy life, no more; and send you home another people than you came hither. I durst, then, ask the worst that heareth me, 'Dare you now be drunk, or gluttonous, or worldly? Dare you be voluptuous, proud, or fornicators any more? Dare you go home, and make a jest at piety, and neglect your souls as you have done?' And why, then, should not the believed truth prevail, if indeed you did believe it, when the thing is as sure as if you saw it?

Quest. 5. If you had seen what you say you do believe, would you hunt as eagerly for wealth, or honor, and regard the thoughts or words of men, as you did before? Though it is only the believer that truly honoreth his rulers, (for none else honor them for God, but use them for themselves,) yet wonder not if he fear not much the face of man, and be no admirer of worldly greatness, when he seeth what they will be, as well as what they are. Would not usurpers have been less feared, if all could have foreseen their fall? Even common reason can foresee that shortly you will all be dust. Methinks I foresee your ghastly paleness, your loathsome blackness, and your habitation in the dark. And who can much envy or desire the advancements that have such an end? One sight of God would blast all the glory of the world, that is now the bait for man's perdition.

Quest. 6. Would temptations be as powerful as now they are, if you did but see the things you hear of? Could all the beauty or pleasures in the world entice you to filthiness or sensuality, if you saw God over you, and judgment before you, and saw what damned souls now suffer, and what believers now enjoy? Could you be persuaded, by any company or recreation, to waste your precious time in vain, with such things in your eye? I am confident you would abhor the motion, and entertain temptations to the most honored, gainful, pleasant sin, as now you would do a motion to eat your own throats, or leap into a coal-pit, or thrust your head into a burning oven. Why, then, doth not faith thus shame temptations, if, indeed, you do believe these things? Will you say, it is your weakness, you cannot choose; or that it is your nature to be lustful, revengeful, sensual, and you cannot overcome it; but if you had a sight of heaven and hell, you could then resist; you cannot now, because you will not; but did you see that which would make you willing, your power would appear. The sight of a judge or gallows can restrain men. The sight of a person whom you reverence can restrain the exercise of your disgraceful sins; much more would the sight of heaven and hell. If you were but dying, you would shake the head at him that would then tempt you to the committing of your former sins. And is not a lively, foreseeing faith as effectual?

Quest. 7. Had you seen what you say you do believe, you would not so much stick at sufferings, nor make so great a matter of it, to be reproached, slandered, imprisoned, or condemned by man, when God and your salvation command your patience. A sight of hell would make you think it worse than madness to run thither to escape the wrath of man, or any sufferings on earth; Rom. viii. 18.

Quest. 8. And O, how such a sight would advance the Redeemer, and his grace, and promises, and word, and ordinances, in

your esteem! It would quicken your desires, and make you fly to Christ for life, as a drowning man to that which may support him. How sweetly, then, would you relish the name, the word, the ways of Christ, which now seem dry and common things!

Quest. 9. Could you live as merrily and sleep as quietly in a negligent uncertainty of your salvation, if you had seen these things, as now you do? Could you live at heart's ease, while you know not where you shall be to-morrow, or must live forever? O no! were heaven and hell but seen before you, your consciences would be more busy in putting such questions, 'Am I regenerate, sanctified, reconciled, justified, or not?' than any the most zealous minister is now.

Quest. 10. I will put to you but one question more. If we saw God, and heaven, and hell before us, do you think it would not effectually reconcile our differences, and heal our unbrotherly exasperations and divisions? Would it not hold the hands that itch to be using violence against those that are not in all things of their minds? What abundance of vain controversies would it reconcile! As the coming in of the master doth part the fray among the schoolboys, so the sight of God would frighten us from contentious or uncharitable violence. This would teach us how to preach and pray better than a storm at sea can do, which yet doth it better than some in prosperity will learn. Did we see what we preach of, it would drive us out of our man-pleasing, self-seeking, sleepy strain, as the cudgel drives the beggar from his canting, and the breaking loose of the bear did teach the affected cripple to find his legs and cast away his crutches. I would desire no better outward help to end our controversies about indifferent modes of worship than a sight of the things of which we speak. This would excite such a serious frame of soul as would not suffer religion to evaporate into formality, nor dwindle into affectation, compliment and ceremony. Nor should we dare to beat our fellow-servants, and thrust them out of the vineyard, and say, You shall not preach, or pray, or live, but upon these or those unnecessary terms. But the sense of our own frailty, and fear of a severe disquisition of our failings, would make us compassionate to others, and content that necessities be the matter of our unity, necessities of our liberty, and both of charity.

If sight, in all these ten particulars, would do so much, should not faith do much, if you verily believe the things you see not?

Alas! corrupted reason is asleep, (with men that seem wise in other things,) till it be awakened by faith or sight. And sleeping reason is unserviceable as folly. It doth no work, it avoids no danger. A doctor that is asleep can defend the truth no better than a waking child. But reason will be reason, and conscience will

be conscience, when the dust is blown out of men's eyes, and sight and feeling have awakened, and so recovered their understandings, or faith more seasonably and happily awakened them.

And O, that now we might all consent to addict ourselves to the life of faith; and,

1. That we live not too much on visibles. 2. That we live on things invisible.

(1.) One would think that worldliness is a disease that carrieth with it a cure for itself; and that the rational nature should be loath to love at so dear a rate, and to labor for so poor a recompense. It is pity that Gehazi's leprosy and Judah's death should no more prevent a succession of Gehazis and Judahs in all generations. Our Lord went before us most eminently in a contempt of earth: "his kingdom was not of this world." No men are more unlike him than the worldlings. I know necessity is the pretense; but it is the dropsy of covetousness that causeth the thirst which they call necessity; and, therefore, the cure is '*non addere opibus, sed imminuere cupiditatem.*' The disease must not be sed, but healed. '*Satis est divitiarum non amplius velle.*' It hath lately been a controversy whether this be not the golden age. That it is '*ætas ferrea,*' we have felt; our demonstrations are undeniable: that it is '*ætas aurata,*' we have sufficient proof; and while gold is the god that rules the most, we will not deny it to be '*ætas aurea,*' in the poet's sense,

"Aurea nunc vere sunt secula: plurimus auro
Venit honos: auro conciliatur amor."

This prevalency of things seen, against things unseen, is the idolatry of the world; the subversion of nature; the perversion of our faculties and actions; making the soul a drudge to flesh, and God to be used as a servant to the world, it destroyeth piety, justice and charity. It turneth '*jus*' by perversion into '*vis*'; or by reversion into '*sui.*' No wonder, then, if it be the ruin of societies, when

"Gens sine justitiâ, sine remige navis in undâ."

It can possess even Demosthenes with a squinancy, if there be but an Harpalus to bring him the infection. It can make a judicature to be as Plutarch called that of Rome, '*ἀσεβῶν χῆρος,*' '*impiorum regionem*'; contrary to Cicero's description of Sulpitius, who was, '*magis justitiæ quam juris consultus, et ad facilitatem æquitatemque omnia contulit; nec maluit litium actiones constituere, quam controversias tollere.*' In a word, if you live by sense, and not by faith, on things present, and not on things unseen, you go backward; you stand on your heads, and turn your heels against heav-

en; you cause the beast to ride the man; and by turning all things upside down, will turn yourselves into confusion.

(2.) Consider that it is the unseen things that are only great and necessary, that are worthy of a man, and answer the excellency of our nature, and the ends of our lives, and all our mercies. All other things are inconsiderable toys, except as they are dignified by their relation to these. Whether a man step into eternity from a palace or a prison, a lordship or a Lazarus state, is little to be regarded. All men in the world, whose designs and business take up with any thing short of heaven, are, in the main, of one condition, and are but in several degrees and forms in the school of folly. If the intendment of your lives fall short of God, it matters not much what it is you seek, as to any great difference. If lesser children play for pins, and bigger boys for points and pence, and aged children for lands and money, for titles of honor and command, what difference is there between these, in point of wisdom and felicity, but that the little ones have more innocent delights, and at a cheaper rate than the aged have, without the vexatious cares and dangers that attend more grave and serious dotage? As holiness to the Lord is written upon all that is faithfully referred to his will and glory, so vanity and sin is written upon all that is but made provision for the flesh, and hath no higher end than self. To go to hell with greater stir, and attendance, and repute, with greater pomp and pleasure, than the poor, is a poor consolation, a pitiful felicity.

(3.) Faith is the wisdom of the soul; and unbelief and sensuality are its blindness, folly and brutishness. How short is the knowledge of the wisest unbelievers! They know not much of what is past; (and less they would know if histories were not of more credit with them than the word of God;) but, alas! how little do they know of what is to come! Sense tells them where they are, and what they are now doing; but it tells them not where they shall be to-morrow. But faith can tell a true believer what will be when this world is ended, and where he shall live to all eternity, and what he shall be doing, what thoughts he shall be thinking, what affections shall be the temper and employment of his soul; what he shall see, and feel, and enjoy; and with what company he shall converse forever. If the pretenders to astrological prediction could but foretell the changes of men's lives, and the time and manner of their deaths, what resort would be to them! and how wise would they be esteemed! But what is all this to the infallible predictions of the All-knowing God, that hath given us a prospect into another world, and showed us what will be forever, more certainly than you know what a day may bring forth!

So necessary is foreknowledge in the common affairs of men, that without it, the actions of the world would be but mad, tumultuary confusion. What would you think of that man's understanding, or how would you value the employments of his life, that looked no further, in all his actions, than the present hour, and saw no more than the things in hand? What would you call him that so spends the day, as one that knoweth not there will be any night; and so passed the night, as one that looked not for the day? that knew not, in the spring, there would be an harvest; or, in the summer, that there would be any winter; or, in youth, that there would be age or death? The silly brutes, that have no foreknowledge, are furnished with an instinct that supplieth the want of it; and also have the help of man's foreknowledge, or else their kind would be soon extinct. The bees labor in summer, as if they foresaw the winter's need. And can that man be wise that foreseeth not his everlasting state? Indeed, he that knoweth not what is to come, hath no true knowledge of what is present; for the worth and use of present things is only in their respect to things eternal; and there is no means where there is no end. What wisdom, then, remains in unbelievers, when all their lives are misemployed, because they know not the end of life? and when all their actions are utterly debased by the baseness of those brutish ends to which they serve and are referred? Nothing is truly wise or honorable that is done for small and worthless things. To draw a curious picture of a shadow, or elegantly write the history of a dream, may be an ingenious kind of foolery; but the end will not allow it the name of wisdom: and such are all the actions of the world (though called heroic, valiant and honorable) that aim at transitory trifles, and tend not to the everlasting end. A bird can neatly build her nest, but is not therefore counted wise. How contrary is the judgment of the world to Christ's! When the same description that he giveth of a fool, is it that worldlings give of a wise and happy man; "One that layeth up riches for himself, and is not rich towards God;" Luke xii. 20, 21. Will you persuade us that the man is wise, that can climb a little higher than his neighbors, that he may have the greater fall? that is attended in his way to hell with greater pomp and state than others? that can sin more syllogistically and rhetorically than the vulgar, and more prudently and gravely run into damnation, and can learnedly defend his madness, and prove that he is safe at the brink of hell? Would you persuade us that he is wise, that contradicts the God and rule of wisdom, and that parts with heaven for a few merry hours, and hath not wit to save his soul? When they see the end, and are arrived at eternity, let them boast of their wisdom as they find cause; we will take them then for more

competent judges. Let the eternal God be the portion of my soul; let heaven be my inheritance and hope: let Christ be my Head, and the promise my security; let faith be my wisdom, and love be my very heart and will; and patient, persevering obedience be my life; and then I can spare the wisdom of the world, because I can spare the trifles that it seeks, and all that they are like to get by it.

What abundance of complaints and calamity would foresight prevent! Had the events of this one year been (conditionally) foreseen, the actions of thousands would have been otherwise ordered, and much sin and shame have been prevented. What a change would it make on the judgments of the world! How many words would be otherwise spoken; and how many deeds would be otherwise done; and how many hours would be otherwise spent, if the change that will be made by judgment and execution were well foreseen! And why is it not foreseen, when it is foreshown? When the omniscient God, that will certainly perform his word, hath so plainly revealed it, and so frequently and loudly warns you of it! Is he wise, that, after all these warnings, will lie down in everlasting woe, and say, 'I little thought of such a day? I did not believe I should ever have seen so great a change.'

Would the servants of Christ be used as they are, if the malicious world foresaw the day when "Christ shall come with ten thousands of his saints, to execute judgment on all that are ungodly?" Jude 14, 15. When he shall "come to be glorified in his saints, and admired in all them that do believe;" 2 Thess. i. 10. When "the saints shall judge the world;" 1 Cor. vi. 2, 3. and when the ungodly, seeing them on Christ's right hand, must bear their sentence on this account, "Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as you did it (or did it not) to one of the least of these, (my brethren,) you did it unto me;" Matt. xxv. Yet a few days, and all this will be done before your eyes; but the unbelieving world will not foresee it.

Would malignant Cain have slain his brother, if he had foreseen the punishment, which he calleth afterwards intolerable? Gen. iv. 12. Would the world have despised the preaching of Noah, if they had believed the deluge? Would Sodom have been Sodom, if they had foreseen that a hell from heaven would have consumed them? Would Achan have meddled with his prey, if he had foreseen the stones that were his executioners and his tomb? Would Gehazi have obeyed his covetous desire, if he had foreseen the leprosy? Or Judas have betrayed Christ, if he had foreseen the hanging himself in his despair? It is foreseeing faith that saves those that are saved, and blind unbelief that causeth men's perdition.

Yea, present things, as well as future, are unknown to foolish unbelievers. Do they know who seeth them in their sin? And what many thousands are suffering for the like, while they see no danger! Whatever their tongues say, the hearts and lives of fools deny that there is a God that seeth them, and will be their Judge; Psal. xiv. 1. You see, then, that you must live by faith, or perish by folly.

(4.) Consider that things visible are so transitory, and of so short continuance, that they do not deserve the name of things; being nothings, and less than nothing, and lighter than vanity itself, compared to the necessary Eternal Being, whose name is I AM. There is but a few days' difference between a prince and no prince; a lord and no lord; a man and no man; a world and no world. And if this be all, let the time that is past inform you how small a difference this is. Rational foresight may teach a Xerxes to weep over his numerous army, as knowing how soon they were all to be dead men. Can you forget that death is ready to undress you; and tell you, that your sport and mirth is done; and that now you have had all that the world can do for those that serve it, and take it for their part? How quickly can a fever, or the choice of an hundred messengers of death, bereave you of all that earth afforded you, and turn your sweetest pleasures into gall, and turn a lord into a lump of clay! It is but as a wink, an inch of time, till you must quit the stage, and speak, and breathe, and see the face of man no more. If you foresee this, O live as men that do foresee it! I never heard of any that stole his winding-sheet, or fought for a coffin, or went to law for his grave. And if you did but see (as wise men should) how near your honors, and wealth, and pleasures do stand unto eternity, as well as your winding-sheets, your coffins, and your graves, you would then value, and desire, and seek them regularly and moderately, as you do these. O, what a fading flower is your strength! How soon will all your gallantry shrink into the shell! 'Si vestra sunt tollite ea vobiscum.' Bern. But yet this is not the great part of the change: the 'terminus ad quem' doth make it greater. It is awful for persons of renown and honor to change their palaces for graves, and turn to noisome rottenness and dirt; to change their power and command for silent impotency, unable to rebuke the poorest worm, that saucily feedeth on their hearts or faces. But if you are believers, you can look further, and foresee much more. The largest and most capacious heart alive is unable fully to conceive what a change the stroke of death will make.

For the holy soul so suddenly to pass from prayer to angelical praise; from sorrow unto boundless joys; from the slanders, and contempt, and violence of men, to the bosom of Eternal Love;

from the clamors of a tumultuous world, to the universal harmony, and perfect uninterrupted love and peace! O, what a blessed change is this! which, believing now, we shall shortly feel.

For an unholy, unrenewed soul, that yesterday was drowned in flesh, and laughed at threatenings, and scorned reproofs, to be suddenly snatched into another world; and see the heaven that he hath lost, and feel the hell which he would not believe; to fall into the gulf of bottomless eternity, and at once to find that joy and hope are both departed; that horror and grief must be his company, and desperation hath locked up the door! O, what an amazing change is this! If you think me troublesome for mentioning such ungrateful things, what a trouble will it be to feel them! May it teach you to prevent that greater trouble, you may well bear this. Find but a medicine against death, or any security for your continuance here, or any prevention of the change, and I have done; but that which unavoidably must be seen, should be foreseen.

But the unseen world is not thus mutable: eternal life is begun in the believer. The church is built on Christ the rock; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. Fix here, and you shall never be removed.

(5) Hence followeth another difference: the mutable creature doth impart a disgraceful mutability to the soul that chooseth it. It disappointeth and deceiveth; and therefore the ungodly are of one mind to-day, and another to-morrow. In health they are all for pleasure, and commodity, and honor; and at death they cry out on it as deceitful vanity. In health they cannot abide this strictness, this meditating, and seeking, and preparing for the life to come; but at death or judgment they will be of another mind. Then, O that they had been so wise as to know their time! And O that they had lived as holy as the best! They are now the bold opposers and reproachers of a holy life; but then they would be glad it had been their own: they would eat their words, and will be down in the mouth, and stand to never a word they say, when sight, and sense, and judgment shall convince them.

But things unchangeable do fix the soul. Piety is no matter for repentance. Doth the believer speak against sin and sinners, and for a holy, sober, righteous life? He will do so to the last: death and judgment shall not change his mind in this, but much confirm it; Rom. viii. 35—37. And therefore he perseveres through sufferings to death: "For this cause we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day. For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding eternal weight of glory. While we look not at the things that are seen, but at the things

which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal;" 2 Cor. iv. 16—18.

(6.) Lastly, let this move you to live by a foreseeing faith, that it is of necessity to your salvation. Believing heaven must prepare you for it before you can enjoy it. Believing hell is necessary to prevent it; Mark xvi. 16. John iii. 18. 36. "The just shall live by faith; but if any man draw back, (or be lifted up,) the Lord will have no pleasure in him;" Heb. x. 38. Hab. ii. 4. "Take heed that there be not in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, to depart from the living God;" Heb. iii. 12. "And be not of them that draw back to perdition, but of them that believe to the saving of the soul;" Heb. x. 39. It is God that saith, "They shall all be damned that believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness;" 2 Thess. ii. 10—12.

May I now, in the conclusion, more particularly exhort you, 1. That you will live upon things foreseen. 2. That you will promote this life of faith in others, according to your several capacities.

Princes and nobles live not always: you are not the rulers of the unmovable kingdom; but of a boat that is in a hasty stream, or a ship under sail that will speed both pilot and passengers to the shore. 'Dixi, estis Dii: ut moriemini ut homines.' It was not the least or worst of kings that said, "I am a stranger upon earth;" Psal. cxix. 19. 'Vermis sum, non homo:' "I am a worm, and no man;" Psal. xxii. 6. You are the greater worms, and we the little ones: but we must all say with Job, "The grave is our house, and we must make our beds in darkness: corruption is our father, and the worm our mother and our sister;" Job xvii. 13, 14. The inexorable leveler is ready at your backs to convince you, by irresistible argument, that dust you are, and to dust you shall return. Heaven should be as desirable, and hell as terrible, to you as to others. No man will fear you after death; much less will Christ be afraid to judge you; Luke xix. 27. As the kingdoms and glory of the world were contemned by him in the hour of his temptation, so are they inconsiderable to procure his approbation. Trust not therefore to uncertain riches: value them but as they will prove at last. As you stand on higher ground than others, it is meet that you should see further. The greater are your advantages, the wiser and better you should be; and the more should better perceive the difference between things temporal and eternal. It is always dark where these glow-worms shine, and where a rotten post doth seem a fire.

Your difficulties also should excite you: you must go as through

a needle's eye to heaven. To live as in heaven in a crowd of business and stream of temptations from the confluence of all worldly things, is so hard, that few such come to heaven. Withdraw yourselves, therefore, to the frequent, serious forethoughts of eternity, and live by faith.

Had time allowed it, I should have come down to some particular instances, as, 1. Let the things unseen be still at hand to answer every temptation, and shun and repel each motion to sin.

2. Let them be still at hand to quicken us to duty, when backwardness and coldness doth surprise us. What! shall we do any thing coldly for eternity?

3. Let it resolve you what company to delight in, and what society to be of; even those with whom you must dwell forever. What side soever is uppermost on earth, you may foresee which side shall reign forever.

4. Let the things invisible be your daily solace, and the satisfaction of your souls. Are you slandered by men? Faith tells you, it is enough that Christ will justify you. O happy day! when he will bring forth our righteousness as the light, and set all straight, which all the false histories or slanderous tongues or pens in all the world made crooked. Are you frowned on or contemned by men? Is it not enough that you shall everlastingly be honored by the Lord? Are you wronged, oppressed, or trodden on by pride or malice? Is not heaven enough to make you reparation? And eternity long enough for your joys? O pray for your malicious enemies, lest they suffer more than you can wish them!

2. Lastly, I should have become, on the behalf of Christ, a petitioner to you for protection and encouragement to the heirs of the invisible world; for them that preach and them that live in this life of faith; not for the honors and riches of the world; but for leave and countenance to work in the vineyard, and peaceably travel through the world as strangers, and live in the communion of saints as they believe. But, though it be for the beloved of the Lord, the apple of his eye, the people that are sure to prevail and reign with Christ forever; whose prayers can do more for the greatest princes than you can do for them, whose joy is hastened by that which is intended for their sorrow; I shall now lay by any further suit on their behalf.

But for yourselves, O use your seeing and foreseeing faculties! Be often looking through the prospective of the promise; and live not by sense on present things; but live as if you saw the glorious things which you say you do believe. That when worldly tales

are insignificant words, and fleshly pleasures have an end, and faith and holiness will be the marks of honor, and unbelief and ungodliness the badges of perpetual shame, and when you must give account of your stewardship, and shall be no longer stewards, you may then be brought by faith unto fruition, and see with joy the glorious things that you now believe. Write upon your palaces and goods that sentence, "Seeing all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought we to be in all holy conversation and godliness, looking for and hasting to the coming of the day of God?" 2 Pet. iii. 11.

HEBREWS xi. 1.

NOW FAITH IS THE SUBSTANCE OF THINGS HOPED FOR, THE EVIDENCE OF THINGS NOT SEEN.

CHAPTER I.

For Conviction.

IN the opening of this text, I have already showed, that 'it is the nature and use of faith to be instead of presence and sight ; or to make things absent, future, and unseen, to be to us, as to our estimation, resolution, and conversation, as if they were present, and before our eyes ; though not as to the degree, yet as to the sincerity of our acts.'

In the handling of this doctrine, I have already showed, that this faith is a grounded, justifiable knowledge, and not a fancy or ineffectual opinion ; having for its object the infallible revelation and certain truth of God ; and not a falsehood, nor a mere probability, or 'verisimile.' I have showed how such a faith will work ; how far it should carry us if its evidence were fully entertained and improved ; and how far it doth carry all that have it sincerely in the least degree ; and I have showed some of the moving considerations that should prevail with us to live upon the things unseen as if they were open to our sight.

I think I may suddenly proceed here to the remaining part of the application, without any recital of the explication or confirmation, the truth lying so naked in the text itself.

The life of faith and the life of sense are the two ways that all the world do walk in to the two extremely different ends which appear when death withdraws the veil. It is the ordination of God, that men's own estimation, choice, and endeavors, shall be the necessary preparative to their fruition. 'Nemo nolens bonus aut beatus est.' Men shall have no better than they value, and choose, and seek. Where earthly things are highest in the esteem and dearest to the mind of man, such persons have no higher nor more durable portion. Where the heavenly things are highest and dearest to the soul, and are practically preferred, they are the portion of that soul. Where the treasure is, the heart will be ; Matt. vi. 21. The sanctifying Spirit doth lead the spiritual man, by a spiritual rule, in a spiritual way, to a spiritual, glorious, durable se-

licity. The sensual part, with the sensual inclination communicated to the corrupted mind and will, doth by carnal reasonings, and by carnal means, pursue and embrace a present, fading, carnal interest ; and therefore it findeth and attaineth no more. "The flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh ; and these are contrary the one to the other ;" Gal. v. 17. "They that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh ; but they that are after the Spirit, the things of the Spirit. To be carnally minded is death ; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace ; because the carnal mind is enmity against God ; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. So, then, they that are in the flesh cannot please God. If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, the same is none of his. If we live after the flesh, we shall die ; but if by the Spirit we mortify the deeds of the body, we shall live ;" Rom. viii 5—14. "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. He that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption ; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap everlasting life." As a man is, so he loveth and desireth ; as he desireth, he seeketh, and as he seeketh, he findeth and possesseth. If you know which world, what riches a man prefers, intends, and liveth for, you may know which world is his inheritance, and whither he is going as to his perpetual abode.

Reason enableth a man to know and seek more than he seeth ; and faith informeth and advanceth reason to know *that* by the means of supernatural revelation, that by no other means is fully known. To seek and hope for no better than we know, and to know no more than is objectively revealed, (while we hinder not the revelation,) is the blameless imperfection of a creature that hath limited faculties and capacities. To know what is best, and yet to choose and seek an inferior, inconsistent good, and to refuse and neglect the best, when it is discerned, is the course of such as have but a superficial opinion of the good refused, or a knowledge not awakened to speak so loudly as may be effectual for choice ; and whose sensuality mastereth their wills and reason, and leads them backward : and those that know not because they would not know, or hear not because they would not hear, are under that same dominion of the flesh, which is an enemy to all knowledge, that is, an enemy to its delights and interest. To profess to know good, and yet refuse it, and to profess to know evil, and yet to choose it, and this predominantly and in the main, is the description of a self-condemning hypocrite. And if malignity and opposition of the truth professed be added to the hypocrisy, it comes up to that pharisaical blindness and obduracy which prepareth men for the remediless sin.

Consider, then, but of the profession of many of the people of this land, and compare their practice with it, and judge what compassion the condition of many doth bespeak. If you will believe them, they profess that they verily believe in the invisible God; in a Christ unseen to them; in the Holy Spirit, gathering a holy church to Christ, and employing them in a communion of saints; that they believe a judgment to come, upon the glorious coming of the Lord; and an everlasting life of joy or torment thereupon. All this is in their creed: they would take him for a damnable heretic that denieth it; and perhaps would consent that he be burned at a stake. So that you would think these men should live as if heaven and hell were open to their sight. But, O, what a hypocritical generation are the ungodly! How their lives do give their tongues the lie! (Remember that I apply this to no better men.) It is a wonder that such men can believe themselves, when they say they do indeed believe the gospel; and shows what a monster the blind, deceitful heart of an impenitent sinner is. In good sadness can they think that they truly believe that God is God, and yet so willfully disobey him? That heaven is heaven, and yet prefer the world before it? That hell is hell, and yet will venture upon it for a lust, or a thing of nought? What! believe that there is at hand a life of endless joy, and no more mind it! but hate them that set their hearts upon it! Do they believe, that except a man be converted and new born, he shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven? as Christ hath told them, (Matt. xviii. 3: John iii. 3. 5.) and yet never trouble their minds about it, to try whether they are converted and new born or not? Do they believe God, that no man shall see him without holiness? (Heb. xii. 14.) and yet dare they be unholy? and perhaps deride it? Do they believe that Christ will "come in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ; who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power:" 2 Thess. ii. 8, 9. And yet dare they disobey the gospel? Do they take God for their absolute Lord and Governor, while they will not so much as meditate on his laws, but care more what a mortal man saith, or what their flesh and carnal reason saith, than what he saith to them in his holy word? Do they take Christ for their Savior, and yet would not be saved by him from their sins, but had rather keep them? Do they take the Holy Ghost for their Sanctifier, while they will not have a sanctified heart or life, and love it not in those that have it? Do they take heaven for their endless home and happiness, while they neither mind nor seek it, in comparison of the world? And do they take the world for vanity and vexation, while they mind and seek it more:

than heaven? Do they believe the communion of saints, while they fly from it, and perhaps detest and persecute it? Is light and darkness more contrary than their words and deeds? And is not hypocrisy as visible in their practice as Christianity in their profession? It is the complexion of their religion. *Hypocrite* is legibly written in the forehead of it. They proclaim their shame to all that they converse with. When they have said, they believe the life to come, they tell men by their ungodly, worldly lives, that they are dissemblers. When their tongue hath loudly said that they are Christians, their tongue and hand more loudly say that they are hypocrites. And when they profess their faith but now and then, in a lifeless, outside piece of worship, they profess their hypocrisy all the day long; in their impious neglect of God and their salvation, in their carnal speeches, in their worldly lives, and in their enmity to the practice of the same religion which they profess. Their hypocrisy is a web so thin, and so transparent, that it leaves their nakedness open to their shame. They have not profession enough to make a considerable cover for their unbelief: they hide but their tongues; the rest, even heart and all, is bare.

O the stupendous power of self-love! The wonderful blindness and stupidity of the ungodly! The dreadfulfulness of the judgment of God in thus deserting the willful resisters of his grace! That ever men (in other things of seeming wisdom) should be such strangers to themselves, and so deceived by themselves, as to think they love the thing they hate! And to think that their hearts are set upon heaven, when they neither love it, nor the way that leadeth to it; but are principally bent another way; that when they are strangers or enemies to a holy life, they can make themselves believe that they are holy; and that they seek that first, which they never seek; and make that the drift and business of their lives, which was never the serious business of an hour! O hypocrites! ask any impartial man of reason, that sees your lives, and hears your prayers, whether you pray and live like men that believe that heaven or hell must be their reward. Ask your families whether they perceive, by your constant prayer, and diligent endeavors, and holy conversations, that your hearts are set on a life to come. It was a cutting answer of a late apostate, to one that told him of the unreasonableness of infidels that denied the life to come: saith he, 'There are none in the world so unreasonable as you Christians, that believe that there is an endless life of joy or misery to come, and do no more to obtain the one, and escape the other. Did I believe such a life as this, I would think all too little that I could do or suffer to make it sure.' Who sees the certainty, greatness, and eternity of the crown of life, in the

resolvedness, fervency, and constancy of your holy labor? You take up with the picture of sermons and prayers, and with the name of Christianity and holy obedience. A little more religion you will admit than a parrot may learn, or a puppet may exercise. Compare your care, and labor, and cost for heaven, and for this world. That you believe the flattering, deceitful world, we see by your daily solicitousness about it: you seek it; you strive for it; you fall out with all that stand in your way; you are at it daily, and have never done; but who can see that you seriously believe another world? You talk idly, and wantonly, and proudly by the hours; but you talk of heaven and holiness but by the minutes. You do not turn the glass when you go to your unnecessary recreations, or your vain discourse; or, at least, you can stay when the glass is run; but in hearing the most necessary truths of God, or in praying for everlasting life, the hour seems long to you, and the tedious preacher is your weariness and molestation. You do not feast and play by the glass; but if we do not preach and pray by it exactly, but exceed our hour, though in speaking of, and for eternity, we are your burden, and put your languid patience to it, as if we were doing you some intolerable wrong.

In worldly matters, you are weary of giving, but seldom of receiving: you grudge at the asker, but seldom at the giver. But if the gift be spiritual and heavenly, you are weary to hear talk of it, and expostulate the case with him that offereth it; and he must show by what authority he would do you good. If by serious, holy conference he would further your preparations for the life to come, or help you to make sure of life eternal, he is examined what power he hath to meddle with you, and promote your salvation. And perhaps he is snappishly told, he is a busy, saucy fellow, and you bid him meddle with his own matters, and let you speed as you can, and keep his compassion and charity for himself: you give him no thanks for his undesired help. The most laborious, faithful servant you like best, that will do you the most work, with greatest skill, and care, and diligence. But the most laborious, faithful instructor and watchman for your souls, you most ungratefully vilify, as if he were more busy and precise than needs, and were upon some unprofitable work; and you love a superficial, hypocritical ministry, that teacheth you but to compliment with Heaven, and leads you such a dance of comical, outside, hypocritical worship, as is agreeable to your own hypocrisy. And thus, when you are mocking God, you think you worship him, and merit heaven by the abuse. Should a minister or other friend be but half as earnest with you, for the life of your immortal souls, as you are yourselves for your estates, or friends, or lives in any danger, you would take them for fanatics, and perhaps do by them as his carnal

friends did once by Christ, (Mark iii. 21.) that went out to lay hold on him, and said, "He is beside himself." For trifles you account it wisdom to be serious; but for everlasting things, you account it folly, or to be more busy and solicitous than needs. You can desire an act of pardon and indemnity from man; when as you are little solicitous about a pardon from God, to whose justice you have forfeited your souls. And if a man be but earnest in begging his pardon, and praying to be saved from everlasting misery, you scorn him, because he does it without book, and say he whines, or speaks through the nose; forgetting that we shall have you, one of these days, as earnest, in vain, as they are that shall prevail for their salvation; and that the terrible approach of death and judgment shall teach you also to pray without book, and cry, "Lord, Lord, open to us," when the door is shut, and it is all too late; Matt. xxv. 11.

O, sirs, had you but a lively, serious, foreseeing faith, that openeth heaven and hell as to your sight, what a cure would it work of this hypocrisy!

1. Such a sight would quicken you from your sloth, and put more life into your thoughts and words, and all that you attempt for God.

2. Such a sight would soon abate your pride, and humble you before the Lord, and make you see how short you are of what you should be.

3. Such a sight would dull the edge of your covetous desires, and show you that you have greater things to mind, and another kind of world than this to seek.

4. Such a sight would make you esteem the temptations of men's reports but as the shaking of a leaf, and their allurements and threats as impertinent speeches, that would cast a feather or a fly into the balance against a mountain, or against the world.

5. Such a sight would allay the itch of lust, and quench the drunkard's insatiable thirst, and turn your gulosity into moderation and abstinence, and acquaint you with a higher sort of pleasures, that are durable, and worthy of a man.

6. Such a sight would cure your desire of pastime, and show you that you have no time to spare, when all is done that necessity and everlasting things require.

7. Such a sight would change your relish of God's ordinances, and esteem of ministers, and teach you to love and savor that which is spiritual and serious, rather than hypocritical strains and shows. It would teach you better how to judge of sermons and of prayers, than unexperienced minds will ever do.

8. Such a sight would cure your malignity against the ways and diligent servants of the Lord; and instead of opposing them,

it would make you glad to be among them, and fast, and pray, and watch, and rejoice with them, and better to understand what it is to believe the communion of saints.

In a word, did you but see what God reveals, and saints believe, and must be seen, I would scarce thank you to be all as serious and solicitous for your souls, as the holiest man alive; and presently to repent and lament the folly of your negligence and delays, and to live as men that know no other work to mind, in comparison of that which extendeth to eternity. I would scarce thank the proudest of you all to lie down in the dust, and in sackcloth and ashes, with tears and cries, to beg the pardon of those sins which before you felt no weight in. Nor the most sensual wretch, that now sticks so close to his ambition, covetousness and lust, that he saith he cannot leave them, to spit them out as loathsome bitterness, and be ashamed of them as fruitless things. You would then say to the most godly, that now seem too precise, 'O why do you not make more haste, and lay hold on heaven with greater violence? Why do you pray with no more fervency, and bear witness against the sins of the world with no more undaunted courage and resolution? And why do you not more freely lay out your time, and strength, and wealth, and all that you have, on the work of God? Is heaven worth no more ado than this? Can you do no more for an endless life, and the escaping of the wrath to come? Shall worldlings overdo you?' These would be your thoughts on such a sight.

CHAPTER II.

Use of Exhortation.

WHAT now remains but that you come into the light, and beg of God, as the prophet for his servant, (2 Kings vi. 17.) to open your eyes, that you may see the things that would do so much, "That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you the spirit of revelation, in the knowledge of him; the eyes of your understanding being enlightened, that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what is the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints;" Ephes. i. 17, 18. O set those things continually before your eyes, that must forever be before them! Look seriously into the infallible word; and whatsoever that foretells, believe it as if it were come to pass. The unbelief of God's threatenings and penal laws is the perdition of souls, as well as the unbelief of promises. God giveth not false

fire, when he dischargeth the canons of his terrible comminations. If you fall not down, you shall find that the lightning is attended with the thunder, and execution will be done before you are aware. If there were any doubt of the things unseen, yet you know it is past all doubt that there is nothing else that is durable and worthy of your estimation and regard. You must be knights and gentlemen but a little while; speak but a few words more, and you will have spoke your last. When you have slept a few nights more, you must sleep till the resurrection awake you, (as to the flesh.) Then where are your pleasant habitations and contents? Your honors and attendance? Is a day that is spent, or a life that is extinct, any thing or nothing? Is there any sweetness in a feast that was eaten, or drink that was drank, or time that was spent in sports and mirth a year ago? Certainly a known vanity should not be preferred before a probable endless joy. But when we have certainty as well as excellency and eternity, to set against certain, transitory vanity, what room is left for further deliberation? Whether we should prefer the sun before a squib, or a flash of lightning that suddenly leaves us in the dark, one would think should be an easy question to resolve.

Up, then! and work while it is day; and let us run and strive with all our might! Heaven is at hand as sure as if you saw it. You are certain you can be no losers by the choice. You part with nothing for all things. You escape the tearing of your heart, by submitting to the scratching of a brier. You that will bear the opening of a vein for the cure of a fever, and will not forbear a necessary journey for the barking of a dog, or the blowing of the wind; O leap not into hell to escape the stinking breath of a scorner! Part not with God, with conscience, and with heaven, to save your purses or your flesh. Choose not a merry way to misery, before a prudent, sober preparation for a perfect, everlasting joy. You would not prefer a merry cup before a kingdom. You would let go a lesser delight or commodity for a greater here. Thus a greater sin can forbid the exercises of a less; and shall not endless joy weigh down a brutish lust or pleasure?

If you love pleasure, take that which is true, and full, and durable. For all that he calleth you to repentance and mortification, and necessary strictness, there is none that is more for your pleasure and delight than God; or else he would not offer you the rivers of pleasure that are at his right hand, nor himself to be your perpetual delight. If you come into a room where are variety of pictures, and one is gravely reading or meditating, and another, with a cup or harlot in his hand, is profusely laughing, with a gaping, grinning mouth; would you take the latter or the former to be the picture of a wise and happy man? Do you approve of the

state of those in heaven? And do you like the way that brought them thither? If not, why speak you of them so honorably? and why would you keep holy days in remembrance of them? If you do, examine the sacred records, and see whether the apostles, and others that are now honored as glorified saints, did live as you do, or rather as those that you think are too precise? Did they spend the day in feasting, and sports, and idle talk? Did they swagger it out in pride and wealth, and hate their brethren that were not in all things of their conceits? Did they come to heaven by a worldly, formal, hypocritical, ceremonious religion; or by faith, and love, and self-denial, and unwearied laboring for their own and other men's salvation, while they became the wonder and the scorn of the ungodly, and as the offscouring and refuse of the world? Do you like holiness when it is far from you; in a dead man, that never troubled you with his presence or reproofs, or in a saint in heaven, that comes not near you? Why, then, do you not like it for yourselves? If it be good, the nearer the better. Your own health, and your own wealth, do comfort you more than another man's; and so would your own holiness if you had it. If you would speed as they that are now beholding the face of God, believe, and live, and wait as they did. And as the righteous God did not forget their work and labor of love for his name, so he will remember you with the same reward, if you show the same diligence to the full assurance of hope unto the end; and "be not slothful, but followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promise;" Heb. vi. 10—12.

O, did you but see what they now enjoy, and what they see, and what they are, and what they do, you would never, sure, scorn or persecute a saint more! If you believe, you see, though not as they, with open face. If you believe not, yet it is not your unbelief, that shall make God's word of none effect; Rom. iii. 3. God will be God if you be atheists. Christ will be Christ if you be infidels. Heaven will be heaven if you, by despising it, go to hell. Judgment sleepeth not when you sleep: it is coming as fast when you laugh at it, or question it, as if your eyes were open to foresee it. If you would not believe that you must die, do you think that this would delay your death one year or hour? If ten or twenty years' time more be allotted you, it passeth as swiftly, and death and judgment come as surely, if you spend it in voluptuousness and unbelief, as if you watched and waited for your change.

We preach not to you *ifs* and *ands*: it is not *perhaps* there is a heaven and hell; but as sure as you are here, and must anon go hence, you must as shortly quit this world, and take up your abode in the world that is now to us invisible. And no tongue can express how sensible you will then be of the things that you will not

now be made sensible of. O, then, with what a dreadful view will you look before you and behind you! Behind you, upon time, and say, 'It is gone, and never will return:' and hear conscience ask you how you spent it, and what you did with it. Before you, upon eternity, and say, 'It is come;' and to the ungodly will be an eternity of woe. What a peal will conscience then ring in the unbelievers' ears! 'Now, the day is come that I was forewarned of. The day and change which I would not believe! Whither must I now go? what must I now do? what shall I say before the Lord for all the sin that I have willfully committed? for all the time of mercy which I lost? How shall I answer my contempt of Christ? my neglect of means, and enmity to a holy, serious life? What a distracted wretch was I, to condemn and dislike them that spent their lives in preparation for this day; when now I would give a thousand worlds to be but one of the meanest of them! O that the church doors, and the door of grace, were open to me now, as once they were, when I refused to enter. Many a time did I hear of this day, and would not believe, or soberly consider of it. Many a time was I entreated to prepare, and I thought a hypocritical, trifling show would have been taken for a sufficient preparation. Now, who must be my companions? How long must I dwell with woe and horror? God, by his ministers, was wont to call to me, 'How long, O scorner, wilt thou delight in scorning? How long wilt thou go on impenitently in thy folly?' And now I must cry out, 'How long, how long must I feel the wrath of the Almighty? the unquenchable fire! the immortal worm! Alas, forever! When shall I receive one moment's ease? When shall I see one glimpse of hope? O never! never! never! Now I perceive what Satan meant in his temptations; what sin intended; what God meant in the threatenings of his law; what grace was good for; what Christ was sent for; and what was the design and meaning of the gospel; and how I should have valued the offers and promises of life. Now I understand what ministers meant, to be so importunate with me for my conversion; and what was the cause that they would even have kneeled to me, to have procured my return to God in time. Now I understand that holiness was not a needless thing; that Christ and grace deserved better entertainment than contempt; that precious time was worth more than to be wasted idly; that an immortal soul and life eternal should have been more regarded, and not cast away for so short, so base a fleshly pleasure. Now all these things are plain and open to my understanding; but, alas! it is now too late! I know that now to my woe and torment, which I might have known in time to my recovery and joy.'

For the Lord's sake, and for your souls' sake, open your eyes, and foresee the things that are even at hand, and prevent these fruitless lamentations. Judge but as you will all shortly judge, and live but as you will wish that you had lived, and I desire no more. Be serious, as if you saw the things that you say you do believe.

I know this serious discourse of another life is usually ungrateful to men that are conscious of their strangeness to it, and, taking up their portion here, are loath to be tormented before the time. This is not the smoothing, pleasing way. But remember that we have flesh as well as you, which longs not to be accounted troublesome or precise; which loves not to displease or be displeased: and had we no higher light and life, we should talk as men that saw and felt no more than sight and flesh can reach; but when we are preaching and dying, and you are hearing and dying, and we believe and know that you are now going to see the things we speak of, and death will straightway draw aside the veil, and show you the great, amazing sight, it is time for us to speak, and you to hear, with all our hearts. It is time for us to be serious, when we are so near the place where all are serious. There are none that are in jest in heaven or hell. Pardon us, therefore, if we jest not at the door, and in the way to such a serious state. All that see and feel are serious, and therefore all that truly believe must be so too. Were your eyes all opened this hour to see what we believe, we appeal to your own consciences, whether it would not make you more serious than we.

Marvel not if you see believers make another matter of their salvation than those that have hired their understandings in service to their sense; and think the world is no bigger or better than their globe or map; and reacheth no farther than they can ken. As long as we see you serious about lands and lordships, and titles and honors, the rattles and tarrying irons of the cheating world, you must give us leave (whether you will or no) to be serious about the life eternal. They that scramble so eagerly for the bonds of worldly riches, and devour so greedily the dregs of sensual delights, methinks should blush (if such animals had the blushing property) to blame or deride us for being a little (alas! too little) earnest in the matters of God and our salvation. Can you not pardon us if we love God a little more than you love your lusts; and if we run as fast for the crown of life as you run after a feather or a fly? Or, if we breathe as hard after Christ in holy desires as you do in blowing the bubble of vain-glory? If a thousand pounds a year in passage to a grave, and the chains of darkness, be worth your labor, give us leave to believe that mercy in order to everlasting mercy, grace in order to glory, and glory as the end of grace, is worth our labor, and infinitely more.

Your end is narrow, though your way be broad, and our end is broad, though our way be narrow. You build as miners in coal-pits do, by digging downwards into the dark ; and yet you are laborious. Though we begin on earth, we build towards heaven, where an attractive loadstone draws up the workmen and the work ; and shall we loiter under so great encouragements ? Have you considered that faith is the beholding grace ? the evidence of things not seen ? and yet have you the hearts to blame believers for doing all that they can do, in a case of such unspeakable, everlasting consequence ? If we are believers, heaven and hell are as it were open to our sight. And would you wish us to trifle in the sight of heaven ? or to leap into hell when we see it as before us ? What name can express the inhuman cruelty of such a wish or motion ? or the unchristian folly of those that will obey you ?

O give us leave to be serious for a kingdom which by faith we see. Blame us for this, and blame us that we are not besides ourselves. Pardon us that we are awake, when the thunder of Jehovah's voice doth call to us, denouncing everlasting wrath to all that are sensual and ungodly. Were we asleep as you are, we would lie still, and take no heed what God or man said to us.

Pardon us that we are Christians, and believe these things, seeing you profess the same yourselves. Disclaim not the practice till you dare disclaim the profession. If we were infidels, we would do as the ungodly world ; we would pursue our present pleasures and commodity, and say, that things above us are nothing to us ; and would take religion to be the troubler of the world ; but till we are infidels or atheists at the heart, we cannot do so.

Forgive us that we are men ; if you take it to be pardonable. Were we brutes, we would eat and drink, and play, and never trouble ourselves or others with the care of our salvation, or the fears of any death but one ; or with resisting sensual inclinations, and meditating on the life to come ; but would take our ease and pleasure while we may.

At least, forgive us that we are not blocks or stones ; that we have life and feeling. Were we insensate clods, we would not see the light of heaven, nor hear the roaring of the lion, nor fear the threats of God himself. We would not complain, or sigh, or groan, because we feel not.

If, therefore, we may have leave to be awake, and to be in our wits, to be Christians, to be men, to be creatures that have life and sense, forgive us that we believe the living God ; that we cannot laugh at heaven and hell, nor jest at the threatened wrath of the Almighty. If these things must make us the object of the world's reproach and malice, let me rather be a reproached man than an honored beast, and a hated Christian than a beloved infidel ; and

rather let me live in the midst of malice and contempt, than pass through honor unto shame, through mirth to misery, and through a senseless to a feeling death. Hate us when we are in heaven, and see who will be the sufferer by it. If ever we should begin to nod and relapse towards your hypocritical formality and senseless indifference, our lively sight of the world invisible, by a serious faith, would presently awake us, and force us confidently to conclude, 'Aut sanctus, aut brutus:' there is practically and predominantly no mean. He will prove a brute that is not a saint.

CHAPTER III.

HAVING done with this general conviction and exhortation to unbelieving hypocrites, I proceed to acquaint believers with their duty, in several particulars.

1. Worship God as believers; "serve him with reverence and godly fear, for our God is a consuming fire;" Heb. xii. 28, 29. A seeing faith, if well excited, would kindle love, desire, fear, and all praying graces. No man prays well that doth not well know what he prays for. When it comes to seeing, all men can cry loud, and pray when praying will do no good. They will not then speak sleepily, or by rote, '*Fides intuendo, amorem recipit, amorem suscitatur. Cor flagrans amore desideria, gemitus, orationes spirat.*' Faith is the burning-glass, which, beholding God, receiveth the beams of his communicated love, and inflameth the heart with love to him again; which mounteth up by groans and prayers, till it reach its original, and love forever rest in love.

2. Desire and use the creature as believers. Interpret all things as they receive their meaning from the things unseen; understand them in no other sense. It is only God and the life to come that can tell you what is good or bad for you in the world. And, therefore, the ungodly, that cannot go to heaven for counsel, are carried about by mere deceits. Take heed what you love; and take heed of that you love. God is very jealous of our love; he sheds abroad his own love in our hearts, that our hearts may be fruitful in love to him, which is his chief delight. By love, he commandeth love; that we may suitably move towards him, and centre in him. He communicateth so much for the procuring of a little, that we should endeavor to give him all that little, and shed none of it inordinately upon the creature by the way. Nothing is great, or greatly to be admired, while the great God is in sight. And it is unsuitable for little things to have great affections; and for low matters to have a high esteem. It is the corruption

and folly of the mind, and the delusion of the affections to exalt a shrub above a cedar, and magnify a mole-hill above a mountain; to embrace a shadow or spectrum of felicity, which vanisheth into nothing, when you bring in the light. The creature is 'nihil et nullipotens;' nothing should have no interest in us, and be able to do nothing with us, (as to the motions that are under the dominion of the will.) God is All and Almighty; and he that is All should have all and command all. And the Omnipotent should do all things with us, by his interest in mortals, as he will do by his force in naturals. I deny not but we may love a friend. One soul, in two bodies, will have one mind, and will, and love. But as it is not the body of my friend that I love, or converse with principally, but the soul, (and therefore should have no mind of the case, the corpse, the empty nest, if the bird were flown,) so is it not the person, but Christ in him, or that of God, which appeareth on him, that must be the principal object of our love. The man is mutable, and must be loved, as Plato did commend his friend to Dionysius; 'Hæc tibi scribo de homine, viz. animante naturâ mutabili.' And, therefore, must be loved with a reserve. But God is unchangeable, and must be absolutely and unchangeably loved. That life is best that is likest heaven; there God will be all; and yet, even there, it will be no dishonor or displeasure to the Deity, that the glorified humanity of Christ, and the New Jerusalem, and our holy society, are loved more dearly than we can love any creature here on earth. So, here, God taketh not that affection as stolen from him, that is given to his servants for his sake, but accepts it as sent to him by them. Let the creature have it, so God have it, finally, in and by the creature; and then it is not so properly the creature that lieth it as God. If you choose and love your friends for God, you will use them for God; not flattering them, or desiring to be flattered by them; but to kindle in each other the holy flame which will aspire and mount, and know no bounds, till it reach the boundless element of love. You will not value them as friends, 'qui omnia dicta et facta vestra laudant, sed qui errata et delicta amice reprehendunt:' not them that call you good, but them that would make you better. And you will let them know, as Phocian did Antipater, that they can never use you, 'ut amicis et adulatoribus;' as friends and flatterers, that differ as a wife and a harlot.

It is hard to love the imperfect creature, without mistakes and inordinancy in our love; and, therefore, usually, where we love most, we sin most; and our sin finds us out; and then we suffer most: and too much affection is the forerunner of much affliction, which will be much prevented, if faith might be the guide of love, and human love might be made divine; and all to be referred to

the things unseen, and animated by them. Love where you can never love too much ; where you are sure to have no disappointments ; where there is no unkindness to eclipse or interrupt it ; where the only error is, that God hath not all ; and the only grief, that we love no more.

Especially in the midst of your enticing pleasures, or enticing employments and profits in the world, foresee the end ; do all in faith, which telleth you, "The time is short ; it remaineth, therefore, that both they that have wives be as though they had none ; and they that weep, as though they wept not ; and they that rejoice, as though they rejoiced not ; and they that buy, as though they possessed not ; and they that use this world, as though they used it not, (or not abusing it ;) for the fashion of this world passeth away ;" 1 Cor. vii. 29, 30.

3. Employ your time as becomes believers. Faith, only, can acquaint you, what an inconceivable weight doth lie upon this inch of hasty time. As you behave yourselves for a few days, it must go with you in joy or misery forever. You have your appointed time for your appointed work. God hath turned the glass upon you : much of it is run out already. No price can call back one hour that you have lost. No power or policy can retard its course ; 'Sic fugiunt frano non remorante dies.' When it comes to the last sand, and time is gone, you will know the worth of it. You will then confess, it should have seemed more precious in your eyes than to have been cast away upon things of nought. O, precious time ! more worth than all the riches of the world ! how highly is it valued by all at last ! and how basely is it esteemed now by the most ! Now, it is no more worth with them than to be sold for unnecessary sports and ease, and wasted in idleness and vain delights ; but then, when it is gone, and all is too late, how loud would they cry, if cries could call back time again ! O, then, what a mercy would it seem, if God would try them once again ! and trust them but with another life, or with Hezekiah's fifteen years ! or but with fifteen days, or hours, upon such terms of grace as they held that life which they abused ! 'It amazeth me to observe the lamentable stupidity of the world, how hard they beg for time when they think it is near an end ; and how carelessly they let it slide away, when they have strength and faculties to improve it. They are grievously afraid lest death deprive them of it ; and yet they are not afraid to deprive themselves of the use and fruit of it, and to cast it away as contemptuously as if it were an useless thing. I seldom come near a dying man, but I hear him complain of the loss of time, and wish it were to spend again, that it might be better valued and used. And yet the living will not be warned. O, value time, as wise men, while you have it ; and not

as miserable fools, when it is gone ! If our Lord said, " I must do the work of him that sent me while it is day ; for the night cometh, when no man can work ; " (John ix. 4.) what need, then, have such as we to be doing, and make much of time ! O, let not company, mirth, or business make you forget the work of time ! Can you play, or loiter away your hours, with eternity in your eye ? Get the sun to stand still, and time to make a truce with you, and to waste no more of the oil of life, before you lose another hour.

O, what heads, what hearts have all those men, that, standing at the verge of an endless world, can think they have any time to spare ! Hath God given you too much ? If not, why do you lose it ? If he hath, why are you loath that he should shorten it ? You would not throw away your gold, as contemptuously as you do your time, when an hour's time is more valuable than gold. Frown on that company that would rob you of half an hour's time, ' Tell them you have something else to do than to feast, or play, or talk away your time unnecessarily. O, tell them you were not made for nothing. You are in a race, and must not stand still ; you are in a fight, and must not cease. Your work is great ; much of it is undone. Your enemies are not idle ; death will not stop ; the Judge is coming, and still beholds you ; and heaven and hell are ready to receive our ending life, and tell us how we spent our time : and can you find time to spare ? You are not made as weathercocks, to stand up on high for men to look at, and, by turning about with every wind, to show them which way it standeth. Turn not your lives into that curse, " You shall spend your strength in vain ; " Levit. xxvi. 20. Believe it, time must be reviewed. The day is near when every man of you had rather find it in your accounts, ' So many hours spent in self-examination and holy meditation ; so many in reading the word of God ; so many spent in fervent prayer ; and so many in doing good to others,' than, ' So many spent in needless sports and pleasures ; so many in idleness and vain discourses ; and so many of the less necessary matters of the world.' Ask those that tempt you to misspend your time, whether, at death and judgment, they had rather themselves have a life of holy diligence to review, or a life consumed in vanity and transitory delights.

You will not suffer impertinences to interrupt your counsels and serious business in the world. You will tell intruders that you are busy, and cannot have while to attend them. And are you going into heaven or hell, and have but a few days' time of preparation, (God knows how few,) and yet can you have while to pass this precious time in vain ? O, what would you not give, ere long, for one of the hours that you now misspend, when the oath is

performed, "That time shall be no longer!" Rev. x. 6. Wonderful! that men can find time for any thing, save that for which they had their time. 'Non quam bene vivant, sed quamdiu, considerant (inquit Seneca) cum omnibus possit contingere ut bene vivant; ut diu, nulli.' To live well is both possible and necessary, and yet is disregarded. To live long is neither possible nor necessary, and yet is sought by almost all. 'Incipiunt vivere cum desinendum est: immo quidam ante desierunt vivere, quam inciperent.' Sen. It is unseasonable we should begin to live, when we should make an end; but it is most unhappy to have made an end before they do begin. 'Pulchrum est (inquit idem) consummare vitam ante mortem; et expectare secure reliquam temporis partem.' Do the great work, and then you may comfortably spend the rest in waiting for the conclusion. Yet you have time, and leave, and helps; you may read, and meditate, and pray, if you will; but, shortly, time will be no more. O, let not Satan insult over your carcasses and tormented souls, and say, 'Now it is too late. Now mourn and repent as long as you will. Now pray, and cry, and spare not.' O, use that faith which beholdeth the invisible world, and maketh future things as present, and then delay and loiter if you can; then waste your hours in idleness or vanity, if you dare: either light or fire shall awake you.

4. Suffer as believers. Fear not the wrath of man; but endure as seeing him that is invisible; Heb. xi. 27. Show plainly that you seek a better country; ver. 14. 16. Read often Heb. xi. xii. Behold the kingdom prepared and secured for you by Christ, and then you will be indifferent which way the wind of human favor or applause shall sit; or what weather lunatic influences and aspects shall produce. Such a faith will make you, with Abraham, to turn your back on all, and engage in pilgrimage for an inheritance after to be received; though he knew not whither he went, (with a distinct, particular knowledge;) Heb. xi. 8. As strangers and travellers, you will not be troubled to leave towns and fields, buildings and wealth, and walks behind you, as knowing that you were but to pass by them, desiring and seeking a better country, that is, a heavenly; and you shall lose nothing by this passing by all in the world; for God will not be ashamed to be called your God; and he hath prepared for you a city; Heb. xi. 13. 16. Seriously respect the recompense of reward, and it will make you "choose rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of the world;" ver. 25, 26. Stephen's sight would cause Stephen's patience. Hold on as Christians; the end is near: "Let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus, the

Author and Finisher of our faith; who, for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God. Consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied, and faint in your mind;” Heb. xii. 2, 3.

You may well endure the buffeting and scorn, if you foresee the honor. You may well endure the crown of thorns, if you foresee the crown of glory: you may endure to be forsaken of all, if you see him that will never fail you nor forsake you. This foretaste of the rivers of pleasure with the Lord, will drown the taste of vinegar and gall. Whine not like worldlings that have lost their portion, when you are stripped as bare as Job. If you are true believers, you have all still, for God is All; you have lost nothing, for faith hath made the world as nothing to you; and will you whine and vex yourselves for nothing? Can you call it nothing so frequently and easily in your prayers, and ordinary speech, and do you now recall this, or tell us, by your serious grief, that you speak but in hypocrisy and jest. ‘*Frangitur nemo molestia adversorum, qui non capitur delectatione prosperorum.*’ August. Had there been less idolatrous love, there would have been less tormenting grief and care. Our life consisteth not in the abundance of the things that we possess. He is not happy that hath them, but he that neither needeth nor desireth them. ‘*Cum in his quæ homines eripiunt, optant, custodiunt, nihil inveneris, non dico quod malis, sed quod velis.*’ Sen. Superfluity doth but burden and break down: the corn that is too rank lodgeth; and the branches break that are overladen with fruit. ‘*Omnia quæ superfluent nocent: segetem nimia sternit ubertas: rami onere fraguntur, ad maturitatem non pervenit fœcunditas: Idem quoque animis evenit, quos immoderata prosperitas rumpit; quia non tantum in aliorum injuriam, sed etiam in suam utuntur.*’ Sen. It is pleasure, and not pain, that is the world’s most deadly sting. It hath never so much hurt us, as when it hath flattered us into delights or hopes. ‘*Et fera et piscis spe aliqua oblectante decipitur.*’ Sen. Hope is the bait, prosperity and pleasure the net, that souls are ordinarily ensnared by. Men lose not their souls for poverty, but for riches; nor for dishonor, but for honor; nor for sorrow, but for delight.

“*Luxuriant animi rebus plerumque secundis.*”

The luxuriations of prosperity bring us so frequently under the pruning-hook. The surfeits and summer fruits of fullness and carnal contentments and delights, do put us to the trouble of our sicknesses and our physic. “How hardly shall rich men enter into heaven!” saith he that well knew who should enter. Saith Augustine, ‘*Difficile, immo impossibile est, ut præsentiis et su-*

turis quis fruatur bonis : ut hic ventrem, et ibi mentem impleat : ut à deliciis ad delicias transeat ; et in utroque seculo primus sit ; ut in terrâ et in cœlo appareat gloriosus ?' The hope is, that with God such human impossibilities are possible. But it is more terrible than desirable to be put upon so great a difficulty. Sweet dishes will have wasps and flies ; but most of them are drowned in their delights. Saith Boetius of prosperity and adversity, '*Ille fallit, hæc instruit : illa mendacium specie bonorum mentes fruentium ligat : hæc cogitatione fragilis felicitatis absolvit. Itaque illam videas ventosam fluentem, suique semper ignaram : hanc sobriam, succinctamque ac ipsius adversitatis exercitatione prudentem.*' A full meal seems best in the eating, but a light meal is better the next day. More thank God in heaven for adversity than for prosperity ; and more in hell cry out of the fruit of prosperity than of adversity. Many did never look towards heaven till affliction cast them on their backs, so that they could look no other way. "It is good for me that I have been afflicted, that I might learn thy statutes," saith David, Psal. cxix. 71. "Before I was afflicted, I went astray ;" ver. 76. "In very faithfulness thou hast afflicted me ;" ver. 75. One sight of heaven, by faith, will force you to reckon "that the sufferings of this present time are unworthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us ;" Rom. viii. 18. To suffer for Christ and righteousness' sake, is but to turn an unavoidable, fruitless pain, into that which, being involuntary, is the more easy, and hath a great reward in heaven ; Matt. v. 11, 12. And to part with that for a crown of life, which else we must part with for nothing. Worldly friends, and wealth, and honor, are summer fruit that will quickly fall. Hungry fowl know where it is harvest, '*At simul intonuit fugiunt.*' Those that must dwell with you in heaven are your sure and steadfast friends, '*Cætera fortunæ, &c.*' Those that are now highest, and least acquainted with the tongue of malice, the unfaithfulness of friends, or rage of enemies, shall shortly say,

"Atque hæc exemplis quondam collecta priorum :
Nunc mihi sunt propriis, cognita vera malis."

There is but the difference of an 'est' and an 'erit,' between their mirth and endless sorrows ; their honor, and their endless shame ; nor between our sorrow and our endless joy. Their final honor is to be embalmed, and their lust to be covered with a sumptuous monument, and their names extolled by the mouths of men, that little know how poor a comfort all this is to the miserable soul. In the height of their honor you may foresee the surgeon opening their bowels, and showing the receptacles of the treasure of the epicure, and what remains of the price that he received for his

betrayed soul. He cuts out the heart with a 'Hæ sedes livoris erant: jam pascua vermis;' you next tread on his interred corpse, that is honored but with a 'Hic jacet,' Here lieth the body of such an one. And if he have honor to be magnified by fame or history, it is a fool-trap to insnare the living, but easeth not the soul in hell. And shall we envy men such a happiness as this? What if they be able to command men's lives, and to hurt those that they hate for a little while? Is this a matter of honor or of delight? A pestilence is more honorable, if destroying be an honor. The devil is more powerful (if God permit him) to do men hurt than the greatest tyrant in the world. And yet I hope you envy not his happiness, nor are ambitious to partake of it. If witches were not akin to devils, they would never sell their souls for a power to do hurt. And how little do tyrannical worldlings consider, that under a mask of government and honor, they do the same!

Let the world then rejoice, while we lament and weep. "Our sorrow shall be speedily turned into joy; and our joy shall no man then take from us;" John xvi. 20. 22. Envy not a dying man the happiness of a feather bed, or a merry dream. You think it hard in them to deny you the liberties and comforts of this life, though you look for heaven; and will you be more cruel than the ungodly? Will you envy the trifling commodities and delights of earth, to those that are like to have no more, but to lie in hell when the sport is ended? It is unreasonable impatience that cannot endure to see them in silks and gallantry a few days, that must be so extremely miserable forever. Your crumbs, and leavings, and overplus is their all; and will you grudge them this much? In this you are unlike your heavenly Father, that doth good to the just and unjust. Would you exchange cases with them? Would you change the fruit of your adversity for the fruit of their prosperity?

Affliction maketh you somewhat more calm, and wise, and sober, and cautelous, and considerate, and preventeth as well as cureth sin. Prosperity makes them (through their abuse) inconsiderate, rash, insensible, foolish, proud, unpersuadable. "And the turning away of the simple slayeth them, and the prosperity of fools destroyeth them;" Prov. i. 32. It is long since Lazarus' sores were healed, and his wants relieved; and long since Dives' feast was ended. O, let me rather be afflicted than rejected; and be a door-keeper in the house of God than dwell in the tents of wickedness; and rather be under the rod than turned out of doors. Look with a serious faith upon eternity, and then make a great matter of enjoyments or sufferings here, if you can. Great joys and sorrows forbid men to complain of the biting of a flea. Thunder-claps drown a whispering voice.

O, what unbelief our impatience and disquietness in sufferings do discover! Is this living by faith, and conversing in another world, and taking God for all, and the world for nothing? What! make such ado of poverty, imprisonment, injuries, disgrace, with heaven and hell before our eyes! The Lord vouchsafe me that condition, in which I shall be nearest to myself, and have most communion with heaven; be it what it will be for the things of earth. These are the desires to which I will stand.

To thank God for the fruit of past afflictions, as the most necessary mercies of our lives, (as some of us have daily cause,) and at the same time to be impatient under present afflictions, or inordinately afraid of those to come, is an irrational, as well as unbelieving incongruity.

Are we derided, slandered, abused, by the ungodly? If we repine that we have enemies, and must fight, we repine that we are Christ's soldiers, and that is, that we are Christians. '*Quomodo potest imperator militum suorum virtutem probare nisi habuerit hostem,*' saith Lactantius. Enemies of God do not use to fight, professedly, against himself, but against his soldiers; '*Non qui contra ipsum Deum pugnent, sed contra milites ejus,*' inquit idem. If the remnants of goodness had not been a derision among the heathens themselves, in the more sober sort, a heathen would not have said, '*Nondum sælix es, si non te turba deriserit: si beatus vis esse, cogita hoc primum contemnere, et ab aliis contemni.*' Sen. Thou art not yet happy, if the rabble deride thee not: if thou wilt be blessed, learn first to contemn this, and to be contemned of others. Nobody will deride or persecute us in heaven.

5. Improve your talents and opportunities in your callings as believers; especially you that are governors. God is the original and end of government. The highest are but his ministers; Rom. xiii. 6. This world is but the way unto another. Things seen are for things unseen; and government is to order them to that end; especially by terrifying evil doers, and by promoting holiness in the earth. The moral, as well as the natural motion of inferior agents, must proceed from the influence of the superior. The spring and the end of every action truly good, are out of sight. Where these are not discerned, or are ignorantly and maliciously opposed, the action is vitiated, and tendeth to confusion and ruin. God is the end of all holy actions; and carnal self is the end of sin. If God and self are infinitely distinct, you may easily see that the actions, materially the same, that are intended to such distant ends, must needs be very distant. Nothing but saving faith and holiness can conquer selfishness in the lowest of the people. But where the flesh hath more plentiful provision, and self is accommodated with the fullest contents of honor and pleasure

that the world affords, how difficult a work, then, is self-denial! and the reign of the flesh is contrary to the reign of Christ. Where the flesh and visible things bear sway, the enemy of Christ bears sway. "The carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to his law, nor can be;" Rom. viii. 7. And how Christ's enemies will receive his laws, and use his messengers, and regard his ways and servants, the most of the world have experience to their cost. The interest of the flesh being contrary to Christ's interest, the competition maintaineth a continual conflict. The word of God doth seem to be against them; the faithful ministers that would save them from their sins do seem to wrong them, and deal too boldly with them. Were it an Elijah, he would be called "The troubler of Israel;" and meet with an "Hast thou found me, O mine enemy?" No measure of prudence, knowledge, piety, innocency, meekness, or self-denial, will serve to appease the wrath and displeasure of this carnal enmity. If it would, the apostles had escaped it; or, at least, it would not have fallen so furiously upon Christ himself. Nay, these are the oil that increase the flame. And Satan hath still the bellows in his hand: he knoweth that if he can corrupt or win the commander, he can rout the army, and ruin them with the greatest ease. It hath been Satan's grand design, since the Christian's name was known on earth, to advance the selfish interest of men against the interest of Christ; and to entangle the rulers of the world in some cause, that Christ, and his word and servants, cannot favor, and so to make them believe that there is a necessity on them to watch against and subdue the interest of Christ. As if it were necessary that the shore be brought to the boat, and not the boat to the shore; and that the physician be brought to the patient's mind, or else destroyed or used as his enemy. I am afraid to speak out the terrible words of God, in Scripture, that are against such persons, lest you should misunderstand me, and think I misapply them. But Christ feareth no man, and hath not spoken his word in vain; and his messengers must be faithful, for he will bear them out; and preventive cautions are easier and safer than reprehensive corrosives. I will but refer you to the texts, that you may peruse them; Matt. xxi. 44. xviii. 3. 6. xxv. 45, 46. Luke xviii. 7. Psal. ii. Luke xix. 27. Acts ix. 4, 5. 1 Thess. ii. 15, 16. Read them with fear, as the words of God. Blessed are those rulers and nations of the earth, that perceive and escape this pernicious snare of the grand deceiver, that, with all his subtlety and industry, endeavoreth to breed quarrels and sow dissensions between them and the universal King.

The more God giveth to the carnal and unwise, the more they think themselves engaged against him; because, by his commands, he

seems to take it from them again by crossing the flesh, which would use it only to fulfill its lusts. Like a dog that fawneth on you till he have his bone, and then snarleth at you, lest you take it from him, and will fly in your face if you offer to meddle with it. Men readily confess that they have their wealth from God, because it cannot be denied, and because they would use the name of God as a cover to hide their covetousness and unlawful ways of getting. But if you judge by their usage of it, and their returns to God, you would think that they believed that they had nothing at all from God but some injuries; and that all their benefits and good were from themselves. The Turkish and Tartarian emperor will say, that all his grandeur and power is from God; that, by making it most divine, he may procure the more reverence and obedience to himself: but when he hath said so for his own interest, he useth the same power against God and his interest, to the banishing of his word and holy worship, and the forbidding the preaching of the gospel of salvation, and to the cherishing of tyranny, pride and lust. As if God had armed them against himself, and made his officers to be his enemies, and gave them power that they might powerfully hinder men's salvation, and made them great to be great oppressors.

As a believing pastor is a priest that standeth between God and the people, to mediate under the great Mediator; to receive from God his word and ordinances, and deliver them to the flock, and to offer up supplications in their names to God; so believing governors of civil societies or families, receive from God a power to rule the subjects for their good; and they use it to make the subjects good, that God may be pleased and honored by all; and the obedience which they require, is such as may be given to God in them. They take power from God, to use it for God, and are so much more excellent than the greatest of ambitious, carnal princes, as the pleasing and honoring of God is a more excellent design and work than the gratifying of fleshly lust, and the advancement of a lump of clay. The kingdoms of the world would all be used as the kingdoms of the Lord, if the everlasting kingdom were well believed. The families of men would be sanctified as churches unto God, if the eternal house, not made with hands, were truly taken for their home, and their trade were to lay up a treasure in heaven. In cities and countries, brethren would dwell in holy peace, and all concur in honoring God, if once they were made fellow-citizens with the saints, and their burgheship and conversation were in heaven; Ephes. ii. 19. Phil. iii. 20, 21.

6. Resist temptations as believers. If you live by faith, then fight against the world and flesh by faith. Faith must be your helmet, and the word of faith must be your shield; (Ephes. vi.

16.) and your victory itself must be by faith; 1 John v. 4. If Satan tell the flesh of the preſerment, riches, or the pleaſures of luſt, answer him with a believing foresight of God's judgment, and the life to come. Never look on the baits of ſin alone, but ſtill look at once on God and on eternity. As a juſt judge will hear both parties ſpeak, or ſee their evidences before he will determine, ſo tell the tempter, that as you have heard what fleſhly allurements can ſay, you will ſee alſo what the word of God ſaith, and take a view of heaven and hell, and then you will answer him.

7. Rejoice as believers. Can faith ſet open the windows of the ſoul, and no light of heavenly pleaſures enter? Can it peruſe the map of the land of promiſe, or ſee and taſte the bunch of grapes, without any ſweetneſs to the ſoul? This is the trueſt belief of heaven, which maketh men moſt like thoſe that are in heaven! And what is their character, work and portion, but the joys of heavenly light and love? Can we believe that we ſhall live in heaven forever? Can we believe that very ſhortly we ſhall be there, and not rejoice in ſuch believing? I know we commonly ſay, that the uncertainty of our proper title is the cauſe of all our want of joy; but if that were all, if that were the firſt and greateſt cauſe, and our belief of the promiſe itſelf were lively, we ſhould at leaſt ſet our hearts on heaven as the moſt delightful and deſirable ſtate; and love would work by more eager deſires and diligent ſeekings, till it had reached aſſurance, and caſt out the hindrances of our joy. How much would a mere philoſopher rejoice, if he could find out natural evidence of ſo much as we know by faith! You may perceive what their content in finding it would be, by their exceeding pains in ſeeking. The unwearied ſtudies by day and night, which many of them uſed, with the contempt of the riches and greatneſs of the world, do tell us how glad they would have been to have ſeen but half ſo far as we may. If they could but diſcover more clearly and certainly the principles, and elements, and forms of beings, the nature of ſpirits; the cauſes of motion; the nature and cauſe of light and heat; the order, courſe and harmony of the univerſal ſystem of the world; what joyful acclamations would this produce in the literate, ſtudious ſort of men! What joy, then, ſhould it be to us, to know by faith the God that made us; the creation of the world; the laws and promiſes of our Creator; the mysteries of redemption and regeneration; the frame of the new creature; the entertainment of the ſpirits of the juſt with Chriſt; the judgment which all the world muſt undergo; the work and company which we ſhall have hereafter; and the endless joys which all the ſanctified ſhall poſſeſs in the ſight and love of God forever! How bleſſed an invention would it be, if all the world could be brought again to the uſe of one univerſal lan-

guage! Or if all the churches could be perfectly reconciled, how joyful would the author of so great a work be! Should we not then rejoice, who foresee by faith a far more perfect union and consent than ever must be expected here on earth?

Alas! the ordinary lowness of our comforts doth tell us that our faith is very small! I say not so much 'the sorrows of a doubting heart,' as the little joy which we have in the forethoughts of heaven, when our title seemeth not much doubtful to us; for those sorrows show that such esteem it a joyful place, and would rejoice if their title were but cleared. But when we have neither the sorrow nor solicitousness of the afflicted soul, nor yet the joy which is any whit suitable to the belief of such everlasting joys, we may know what to judge of such an ineffectual belief; at best, it is very low and feeble. It is a "joy unspeakable, and full of glory," which unseen things should cause in a believer; (1 Pet. i. 6—8.) because it is "an exceeding eternal weight of glory" which he believeth; 2 Cor. iv. 17, 18.

8. Finally, learn to die also as believers. The life of faith must bring you to the very entrance into glory: where one doth end the other begins. As our dark life in the womb, by nutriment from the mother, continueth till our passage into the open world. You would die in the womb, if faith should cease before it bring you to full intuition and fruition. "By faith Joseph, when he died, made mention of the departing of the children of Israel;" Heb. xi. 22. Joseph's faith did not die before him. "These all died in faith, confessing that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth, and declaring that they sought a better country;" Heb. xi. 3. They that live by faith must die in faith; yea, and die by faith too. Faith must fetch in their dying comforts. And O how full, and how near a treasure hath it to go to! To die to this world, is to be born into another. Beggars are best when they are abroad. The travail of the ungodly is better to them than their home: but the believer's home is so much better than his travail, that he hath little cause to be afraid of coming to his journey's end; but should rather every step cry out, 'O when shall I be at home with Christ!' Is it earth or heaven that you have prayed for, and labored for, and waited, and suffered for till now? And doth he indeed pray, and labor, and suffer for heaven, who would not come thither?

It is faith which overcometh the world and the flesh, which must also overcome the fears of death, and can look with boldness into the loathsome grave, and can triumph over both as victorious through Christ. It is faith which can say, 'Go forth, O my soul; depart in peace: thy course is finished: thy warfare is accomplished: the day of triumph is now at hand: thy patience hath

no longer work: go forth with joy: the morning of thy endless joys is near; and the night of fears and darkness at an end. Thy terrible dreams are ending in eternal pleasures; the glorious light will banish all thy dreadful spectres, and resolve all those doubts which are bred and cherished in the dark. They whose employment is their weariness and toil, do take the night of darkness and cessation for their rest; but this is their weariness: defect of action is thy toil; and thy most grievous labor is to do too little work; and thy incessant vision, love and praise, will be thy incessant ease and pleasure; and thy endless work will be thy endless rest! Depart, O my soul, with peace and gladness! Thou leavest not a world where wisdom and piety, justice and sobriety, love, and peace, and order do prevail; but a world of ignorance and folly, of brutish sensuality and rage, of impiety and malignant enmity to good; a world of injustice and oppression, and of confusion and distracting strifes! Thou goest not to a world of darkness and of wrath, but of light and love; from hellish malice to perfect amity; from Bedlam rage to perfect wisdom; from mad confusion to perfect order; to sweetest unity and peace; even to the spirits of the just made perfect, and to the celestial, glorious city of God! Thou goest not from heaven to earth, from holiness to sin, from the sight of God into an infernal dungeon; but from earth to heaven, from sin and imperfection into perfect holiness; and from palpable darkness into the vital splendor of the face of God! Thou goest not among enemies, but to dearest friends; not amongst mere strangers, but to many whom thou hast known by sight, and to more whom thou hast known by faith, and must know by the sweetest communion forever. Thou goest not to unsatisfied justice, nor to a condemning, unreconciled God; but to love itself, to infinite goodness, the fountain of all created and communicated good; to the Maker, Redeemer, and Sanctifier of souls; to him who prepared heaven for thee, and now hath prepared thee for heaven. Go forth then in triumph, and not with terror, O my soul! The prize is won: possess the things which thou hast so long prayed for and sought! Make haste and enter into thy Master's joy! Go view the glory which thou hast so long heard of; and take thy place in the heavenly choir; and bear thy part in their celestial melody! Sit down with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of God; and receive that which Christ in his covenant did promise to give thee at the last. Go boldly to that blessed God with whom thou hast so powerful a Mediator, and to the throne of whose grace thou hast had so oft and sweet access. If heaven be thy fear or sorrow, what can be thy joy? And where wilt thou have refuge, if thou fly from God? If perfect, endless pleasures be thy terror, where then dost thou expect content? If grace have taught thee long

ago to prefer the heavenly and durable felicity, refuse it not now when thou art so near the port. If it have taught thee long ago to be as a stranger in this Sodom, and to renounce this sinful world and flesh, linger not now as unwilling to depart; repent not of thy choice when all that the world can do for thee is past; repent not of thy warfare when thou hast got the victory; nor of thy voyage when thou art past the storms and waves, and ready to land at the haven of felicity.

Thus faith may sing our 'nunc dimittis,' when the flesh is loathest to be dissolved.

But we must live by faith if we would thus die by faith. Such a death doth not use to be the period of a fleshly, worldly life; nor of a careless, dull and negligent life. Nature, which brought us into the world, without our forecast or care, will turn us out of the world without it. But it will not give us a joyful passage, nor bring us to a better world without it. It costeth worldlings no small care to die in an honorable and plentiful estate, (if that they may fall from a higher place than others, and may have something to make death more grievous and unwelcome to them, and may have a greater account to make at judgment; and that their passage to heaven may be as a camel's through a needle.) And may a believing, joyful death be expected, without the preparations of exercise and experience in a believing life? Nature is so much afraid of dying, and an incorporated soul is so incarcerated in sense, and so hardly riseth to serious and satisfying apprehensions of the unseen world, that even true believers do find it a work of no small difficulty to desire to depart and be with Christ, and to die in the joyful hopes of faith. A little abatement of the terrors of death, a little supporting hope and peace, is all that the greater part of them attain, instead of the fervent desires, and triumphant joys, which the lively belief of endless glory should produce. O, therefore, make it the work of your lives! of all your lives! your greatest work, your constant work, to live by faith; that the faith which hath first conquered all the rest of your enemies, may be able also to overcome the last; and may do your last work well, when it hath done the rest.

**WHAT LIGHT MUST SHINE IN
OUR WORKS.**

WHAT LIGHT MUST SHINE IN OUR WORKS.

MATTHEW v. 16.

LET YOUR LIGHT SO SHINE BEFORE MEN, THAT THEY MAY SEE YOUR GOOD WORKS, AND GLORIFY YOUR FATHER WHICH IS IN HEAVEN.

THE work designed for this time is to resolve this practical case, 'What is that light which must shine before men in the works of Christ's disciples for the glorifying of God?'

But the explication of the text is therein included.

The Son of Righteousness, Jesus Christ, who "giveth light to every one that cometh into the world," or, coming into the world, giveth light to all, from his fullness hath bespangled the inferior heavens, his church, with many refulgent stars, appointed freely to communicate the heavenly light which they had freely received. In his corporeal presence he prepared them; and his Spirit having moved on the darkened world, he irresistibly said, at the descent of the Holy Ghost, "Let there be light, and there was light," beginning at Jerusalem, but not fixed to any determinate place; but what he gave them necessarily and antecedently they were to exercise as free agents, by a command more resistible, which he here gives them. Having told them their office, and given them their names, ver. 14., "Ye are the lights of the world," he next tells them how they must be useful. They must be conspicuous, 1. Because the church where they are placed "is like a city on a hill which cannot be hid." 2. Because it is the end of him that lighteth them, and sets them up, not to put them under a bushel, but on a candlestick, to give light to all his house. And therefore no men's silencing or prohibitions, no difficulties or sufferings, will excuse them from their duty; lights they are, and shine they must; but lest they should think that it is preaching only which he meaneth, he here, commanding them their duty, lets them know that the splendor of Christianity is in works as well as words, and thereby giveth us cause to think that it is all his disciples, or Christians, that he speaketh to, though first and eminently to the apostles and teachers of the world.

1. By "light" he meaneth both the illuminating knowledge,

which must be uttered by words, and the splendor or glory of holiness, which must be refulgent in their lives.

2. He calls it "your" light, as being their own in his graces, as the subjects, and their own in exercise, as the actors, though both under him.

3. It must "shine," that is, appear in its splendor, for the illumination and conviction of the world.

4. It must "so" shine as is fittest to attain these ends: it is not every twinkling that will answer their great obligations.

5. It must be "before men;" that is, both those within, and especially those without the church, that are but men.

6. It must be a light shining in "good works," and their own works; for that is the grand difference between the disciples of Christ and others. He teacheth them not only to know and talk well, but to do well; and he maketh men such as he teacheth them to be: "Non magna loquimur, sed vivimus," said Tertullian.

7. "That men may see," doth signify both the necessary refulgent quality of their works, and also the end of God and them.

8. But it is not hypocritical ostentation of what they are not, nor of what they are and have, as for their own glory, to be honored and praised of men, but for the glorifying of God.

Who is called "their Father," to show their obligation to him, and to encourage them by the honor and comfort of their relation, and to show why their works will tend to the glorifying of God, even because they are so nearly related to him.

And he is said to be "in heaven," because there he appeareth operatively in his glory to the beautifying [beatifying] of holy spirits. As the soul is said to be in the head, and we look a man in the face when we talk to him, as if there principally we saw the man; because it is in the head that it operateth by reason. So much of the meaning of the words.

Many doctrines the text affordeth us: as,

1. Christ's disciples are the lights of the world, both in the splendor of wisdom and holiness.

2. Their most eminent and convincing splendor is in their good works.

3. Their light and good works are their own, though by the grace of Christ; and it is no injury to Christ, or his righteousness, or grace, to say, that they are their own.

4. The splendor of Christians in their good works must be such as may be seen of men.

5. The glorifying of God must be the end of our good works, and of their appearance unto men.

6. As bad as corrupted nature is, there is yet something in

mankind which tendeth to the approving of the good works of Christians, and to their glorifying God thereupon.

7. God is glorified even by common men, when they approve of the glory of holiness in believers: it is not only by saints that God is glorified.

8. As contrary as holiness is to corrupted nature, there is such resplendent goodness in true Christians' works, which common men may glorify God for; and so somewhat in them, and in Christianity, which hath such agreeableness as may tend to further good.

9. The excellency and splendor of the good works of Christians, especially teachers, is a grand means, ordained by God himself, for the conviction of the world, and the glorifying of God.

But the resolving the question, What the splendor of these works must be, is my present undertaken task.

God is not glorified by our adding to him, but by our receiving from him; not by our making him greater, or better, or happier than he is, but by owning him, loving him, and declaring him as he is, that we and others may thereby be wise, and good, and happy.

He is his own glory and ours; and by his own light only we must know both him and all things. We are not called to bring our candle to show the world that there is a sun, but to persuade them into its light, to open the windows and curtains, to disperse the clouds, and to open the eyes of blinded sinners.

1. The way of doing this, and glorifying God, is in the order following:—

1. The first thing that our works must show is their own goodness: they can never prove the cause good until it is clear that they are good themselves; therefore, doubtless, Christ here intendeth that we must abound especially in those good works which the world is capable of knowing to be good, and not only in those which none but Christians themselves approve. If believers and unbelievers agreed in no common principles, we were not capable of preaching to unbelievers, nor convincing them, nor of conversing with them. There are many excellent things which nature doth approve, and which both parties are agreed to be good; by the advantage of these, as granted principles, we must convince them of the conclusions which they yet deny; and not as the scandalous Christian, so absurdly affect singularity, as to make light of all good which is taken for good by unbelievers, and to seek for eminency in nothing but what the world thinks evil. There is a glory in some good works, which all do honor, and which manifesteth itself.

2. And then the goodness of the work doth manifest the good-

ness of the doer. Every man's work is so far his own, that he is related to it, and by it, either as laudable, or as culpable; as it is Gal. vi. 4, 5. "Let every man prove his own work, and then shall he have rejoicing in himself alone, and not in another; for every man shall bear his own burthen." God himself will judge men according to their works; and so will men; and so must we (much) do by ourselves; for it is the rightest judging which is likest God's.

This subordinate honor God grants to his servants:—

If their works were not an honor to them, as the next agents, they could be none to him in their morality, as man's acts; though they might, as acts in general, be ordered to good by his own goodness. If God's natural works of creation (sun, and moon, and earth, &c.) were not praiseworthy in themselves, God would not be praised for them as their Maker. There are works that God is said to be dishonored by; (Rom. ii. 23, 24.) and what are they but such as are really bad, and a dishonor to the authors? It is so far from being true, that no praise, or honor, or comfort from good works, is to be given to man; that God himself is not like else to be honored by them as morally good, if the actors be not honored by them; the world must first be convinced that Christians are far better than other men, and the righteous more excellent than his neighbor, before they will glorify God as the Author of their goodness. In God's own judgment, "Well done" is the first word, and "Good and faithful servant," is the second, and "Enter thou into the joy of thy Lord," is the third.

Two sorts of scandalous persons rob God of his honor in his saints.

1. Those that, professing Christianity, live wickedly, or, at least, no better than other men; whose lives tell the world that Christians are but such as they.

2. Those that slander and belie true believers, and would hide their goodness, and make them odious to the world.

As for them that say only that we have no righteousness in ourselves by which we can be justified, I shall not differ with them, if they do but grant that all shall be judged according to their works; and that he that is accused as an infidel, impenitent, an hypocrite, or an unregenerate, ungodly person, must against that accusation be justified by his own faith, repentance, sincerity, and holiness, or be unjustified forever.

3. The next thing to the work and the person that is hereby honored, is the Christian religion itself, with the Spirit's operations on the souls of Christians; the outward doctrine and example of Christ, who teacheth his servants to be better than the world; and the inward sanctification of the Spirit, which maketh them better.

The air and food are commended which make men healthy, and the medicines are praised which cure the disease ; that is accounted good, as a means and cause which doth good, and which maketh men good : if Christians were more commonly and notoriously much better than all other men, the world would believe that the gospel and the Christian religion were the best.

But when scandalous Christians appear as bad, or worse than infidels, the world thinks that their religion is as bad, or worse than theirs.

4. The next ascent of honor is to the Maker or Author of our religion : the world will see that he is good that maketh so good a law and gospel, and that maketh all his true disciples so much to excel all other men. And here the first honor will be to the Holy Spirit, which reneweth souls, and maketh them holy ; and the next will be to the Son, our Savior, who giveth us both the word and Spirit ; and the highest or ultimate glory will be to God the Father, who giveth us both his Son and his Spirit.

And thus honor ascendeth to the highest by these steps, and the world beginneth at that which is nearest to them, and reason will proceed by these degrees ; 1. The excellent, holy lives of Christians are better than those of other men. 2. Therefore Christians are better than other men. 3. Therefore their religion is the best, or the word and work which make them such. 4. Therefore the Spirit is good which makes them good ; the Savior is good who giveth them the word and Spirit ; and God, the Fountain of all, even the Father of mercies, is the Fountain of all good, and consequently the end of all. And thus God is known and glorified by our works.

II. The works which thus glorify him are first to be described in general, and then enumerated in special.

I. In general, 1. They must be such as make or show men to be in their places like to God : they must be such as represent the particular perfections of God, which are called his communicable attributes ; and such as declare his relations to us ; and such as declare his attributes, as so related, and his works.

As, 1. We must so live that men may see that indeed we take not ourselves to be our own, but God to be our absolute owner ; and that it is not ourselves, but he that must of right dispose both of us and ours ; and that we willingly stand to his disposal ; 1 Cor. vi. 19. "Ye are not your own."

2. We must so live as may declare that we are not lawless, nor the mere servants of men, but the resolved subjects of God, the Sovereign King of all ; and that really we are ruled by his laws and will, and not by our own lusts or wills, nor by the wills of any, but as under him ; and that we fear not any hurt to the flesh,

or them that can but kill the body, in comparison of that one Lawgiver and Judge, who is able to save or destroy forever; (Luke xii. 4. James iv. 12. 1 Cor. vii. 23.) and that we are moved more by his promises, than by all that mortal men can give us; and trust wholly to the heavenly reward of glory, and not to the transitory prosperity of this world, believing that God is true and just, and none of his word shall never fail; 1 Peter i. 3. "We are begotten again unto a lively hope, through the resurrection of Christ to an inheritance incorruptible," &c.

3. We must so live as may declare that God is our grand benefactor, from whom we have all the good that ever we received, and from whom we hope for all that ever we shall possess; and that he is infinitely good, the original and end of all created good: we must live as those that believe that we are made for God, even to glorify him, and please his blessed will; not by making him beholden to us, but by a willing receiving of his mercies, and a willing improvement of them to our own felicity; and as those that believe that his love is better than life itself, and that to know him and love him, and glorify him forever, is the ultimate end and happiness of man; Psalm iv. 7, 8. and lxiii. 3. and lxxiii. 25, 26. 28. Phil. iii. 7, 8. Matt. vi. 33. 1 Peter i. 5, 6. 8, 9. 2 Cor. v. 1.

2. And we must so live in relation to Christ, and to his Spirit, as may declare to the world that the mercy of the Father is conveyed to us by the Son, and the grace of the Father and the Son by the Spirit; and what wonders of wisdom, goodness and power, truth and justice, holiness and mercy, are manifest in Christ, and his mediation to mankind; Gal. ii. 20. Eph. iii. 16, 17. Phil. i. 20, 21. John xvii. 10.

3. In some the works that glorify God must have these three parts of his likeness upon them.

1. They must be works of light, like the light which from the Father of lights doth illuminate us. Christians must be much wiser than the men of the world, in holy, though not in worldly things; Col. i. 9. 28. and iii. 16. Darkness is the state of Satan's kingdom, and ignorant Christians are scandalous, and a dishonor to Christ; not those that are ignorant of unnecessary, unprofitable, or unrevealed things, but those that are ignorant of revealed, necessary; saving truths; 1 Cor. iii. 2. Heb. v. 11, 12.

2. They must be works of holy love to God and man, which show that God and goodness have our hearts, and that we would imitate God in doing good to all, according to our places and power; Gal. vi. 10. Rom. xiii. 10—12.

3. They must be works of life and power, where serious diligence expresseth zeal; and that we set ourselves no lower bounds

than with all our heart, and mind, and might; 2 Tim. i. 7. Rom. xii. 11. Thus much for the general description of them.

II. The description of a Christian whose works glorify God, according to Scripture and experience, may be given you in the following particulars:—

I. He is one that placeth his saving religion in the practical knowledge of the only true God, and Jesus Christ the Savior, whom he hath sent: John xvii. 3. He puts no limits to his endeavors after useful knowledge, but what God hath put by his word or providence: he would abound in holy wisdom, and thinks it worth his greatest diligence, and is still upon the increasing hand: he hath so much knowledge of the lesser matters of religion, as to keep him from scandalous miscarriages about them; but it is the knowledge of God, and of a crucified and glorified Christ, in which he taketh wisdom to consist; John xvii. 3. 1 Cor. ii. 2. This is the light in which he hath his daily conversation, the light which governeth his will and practice, which feedeth his meditations, his prayers, and his discourse; which repelleth his temptations, which maintaineth his hope, and is his daily work of recreation, his food, and feast.

For they will now perceive, 1. That his religion is not a matter of names and words, and trifling controversies, but hath the greatest and most excellent subject in the world; and as nature teacheth all to reverence God, so it will tell them that they must reverence that religion, that conversation, and that person, who is most divine, and where the most of God appeareth.

2. And they will see that his religion consisteth not in uncertainties, which no man can be sure of when he hath done his best; but in things so sure as none should doubt of; which will easily bring men over to consent, and shame or silence contradicters.

3. And then they will see that it is a religion which all sober persons are united in, and doth not lose its authority or reverence, by the divisions, wranglings, and digladiations of sects of different minds; for God is denied by no sober man, nor the essentials of Christianity by any true Christian.

4. And men will see that our religion is no matter of indifferency, which one may do well enough without, but of absolute necessity to salvation, and that which man was made and redeemed for; and a religion of the greatest subject, the greatest certainty, the greatest consent, and the greatest necessity, will honor itself and its Author in the world, if it be rightly represented in the lives of them that do profess it.

But when men's overdoing shall pretend that all this is too little, and shall seek to raise it, as to more perfection, by their own inventions, or uncertain opinions in doctrine, worship, church-dis-

cipline, or practice, they presently cast it as a football before the boys in the streets, and make it a matter of doubtful, endless disputations, of multiplied sects, of pernicious contentions, and cruel persecutions; and then the reverence and glory of it is gone, and every philosopher will vie with it in subtilty, and every stranger will presume to censure it, if not to blaspheme it and deride it. And thus overdoers are the scandals of the world.

II. The Christian that will glorify God, and his profession, must be conscionable in the smallest matters, but he must ever describe and open the nature of his religion, as consisting in great and certain things, and not talk too much of smaller matters, as if it were those that men were to be saved by. Tell men of the necessity of believing, fearing, obeying, trusting, and loving God, and of coming to him by Jesus Christ, the great Mediator between God and man; tell them of the intrinsic evil of sin, and of God's justice, and of man's corruption, and of the nature and excellency of holiness, and of the necessity of being new-born of the Holy Spirit, and of mortifying the desires and deeds of the flesh; and tell them of judgment, heaven, and hell, especially the certainty and excellency of the everlasting promised glory; persuade them to believe all this, to think much of all this, and to be true to what they know, and to make it the work of life to be always prepared for death. Let this be your discourse with sinners, (as I told you in the first character it must be your own religion,) and then men will perceive that religion is a matter that doth indeed concern them, and that they are indeed great and necessary things in which you differ from ungodly men; but the scandalous Christian talketh most of external church-orders, and forms and opinions, and parties, and thereby maketh the ignorant believe that the difference is but that one will sit when the other kneeleth; and one will pray by the book, and the other without book; and one is for this church-government, and another for that; and one for praying in white, and the other in black. And talking too much of such things as these deceiveth the hearers: some it maketh formal hypocrites, who take up this for their religion; and the rest it hardeneth, and maketh them think that such people are only more humorous, and self-conceited, and giddy, and factious than others, but no whit better.

III. The genuine Christian hath an humble and cautelous understanding; sensible when he knoweth most how little he knoweth, and how much he is still unacquainted with, in the great mysterious matters of God. His ignorance is his daily grief and burden, and he is still longing and looking for some clearer light. Not a new word of revelation from God, but a clearer understanding of his word. He knoweth how weak and slippery man's un-

derstanding is, and he is humbly conscious of the darkness of his own. Therefore he is not conceitedly wise, nor a boaster of his knowledge; but saith, as Paul, (1 Cor. viii. 2.) "If any man think that he knoweth any thing, (that is, is proudly conceited of his own knowledge,) he knoweth nothing yet as he ought to know."

And hence it is, that though he daily grow in the firmer apprehension of necessary truths, yet he is never confident and peremptory about uncertain, doubtful things; and therefore he is not apt to be quarrelsome and contentious, nor yet censorious against those that differ from him in matters of no greater moment. And hence it is that he runneth not into sects, nor burneth with the feverish, dividing zeal, nor yet is scandalously mutable in his opinions; because, as one that is conscious of his ignorance, he doth not rashly receive things which he understands not, but suspendeth his judgment till evidence make him fit to judge; and joineth with neither of the contending parties, till he is sure to know, indeed, which of them is right; and thus he avoideth that dishonoring of religion, which the scandalous Christian is woefully guilty of; who, with an unhumbled understanding, groweth confident upon quick and insufficient information, and judgeth before he understandeth the case, and before he hath heard or read, and considered, what on both sides may be said, and what is necessary to a true understanding. And thus, either by audacious prating of what he never understood, or reviling and censuring men wiser than himself, or by making himself a judge where he hath need to be many years a learner, or making a religion of his own mistakes, and setting up dividing sects to propagate them, or else by shameful mutability and unsettlement, he becometh a scandal to harden unbelievers, and a disgrace to the church, and a shame to his profession: read James iii. 15—17. Conceited wisdom kindleth a contentious zeal, and is not of God, but from beneath.

IV. The Christian, who glorifieth God by his religion, is one that so liveth that men may perceive that his carnal interest is not the end and ruler of his life; but that God is his end, and to please him is his work and his reward, in which he is comforted, though the flesh and the world be never so much displeased; and that the perfect light and love of God in the unseen glory of another life is the sanctifying sum of all his hopes, for which all the world must be forsaken. To talk much of heaven, and to be as much and eager for the world as others, is the way by which the scandalous hypocrite doth bring religion into contempt. It is no high, nor very honorable work, to talk of the vanity of the world, but to live above it, and to be out of the power of it; nor is it any great matter to speak honorably of heaven, but to live as believ-

ing seekers of it, and as those that have there their treasure and their hearts, (Matt. vi. 20, 21.) and are comforted more by the hopes of the life to come, than by all their possessions or pleasures in the world. If we will glorify God, our lives must persuade men that he will certainly be our everlasting portion, and the sure and plentiful rewarder of them that diligently seek him; Heb. xi. 6. It is much of the use of a true Christian's life to convince unbelievers that there is a heaven for saints; and the scandalous worldling persuadeth them that there is none; Matt. v. 5. 11, 12, Phil. iii. 26. 21. Col. iii. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5.

V. Therefore it glorifieth God and our religion when Christians live in greater joy, or at least in greater contentedness and peace than other men. When they can answer all the crosses in the world sufficiently with this, that "God is their God, and his love shall be their endless joy;" (Psalm lxxiii. 1. and lxxxiii. 25, 26.) and when they can live by faith and not by sight; (2 Cor. v. 7.) and can rejoice in hope of the glory of God; (Rom. v. 3. 5.) and can comfort themselves and one another with this, that they shall forever be with the Lord; (1 Thess. iv. 17, 18.) and can trust him to the death, who hath said, I will never fail thee nor forsake thee; Heb. xiii. 5. If you would have other men honor your God and your religion, and desire to be such as you, you must really show them that you are on safer grounds, and in a happier state than they; and that you will hardly do, if you be not more comfortable than they, or at least settled in more peace and contentedness of mind, as those that have a certain cure for the fears of death, and the danger that ungodly men are in of the revenging justice of the final Judge.

I confess it is possible for trembling, troubled, and distressed Christians to be saved. But O that they knew what a scandal they are to unbelievers, and what a dishonor to God, whom their lives should glorify! What man will fall in love with terrors and inquietness of mind? If you would glorify God by your fears and tears, they must be such as are accompanied with faith and hope; and you must not only show men what would make you happy, if you could obtain it, but also that it is attainable. Happiness is every man's desire, and none will come to Christ unless they believe that it tendeth to their happiness: they take up with the present pleasures of the flesh, because they have no satisfying apprehensions of any better. And if no man show the first-fruits of any better here, they will hardly believe that they may have better hereafter: it is too hard a talk to put a poor drunkard, fornicator, or a poor, covetous worldling on, to believe that a poor, complaining, comfortless Christian is happier than he; and that so sad and inquiet a life must be preferred before all his temporal

contentments and delights. You must show him better, or the signs and fruits of better, before he will part with what he hath: you must show him the bunch of grapes, if you will have him go for the land of promise, when he is told of giants that must be overcome: and O what a blessing is reserved for every Caleb and Joshua, that encourage souls, and glorify the promise! And how much do dejected discouragers of sinners dishonor God, and displease him! I have known some ungodly men, when they have seen believers rejoicing in God, and triumphantly passing through sufferings in the joyful hopes of glory, to sigh, and say, 'Would I were such a one, or in his case;' but I have seldom heard any say so of a person that is still sad, or crying, or troubling themselves and others with their scruples, crosses, or discontents; unless it be in respect to their blameless living, perhaps condoling them, they may say, 'Would I had no more sin to trouble me than you have.' I confess that some excellent Christians do show no great mirth in the way of their conversation; either because they are of a grave and silent temper, or taken up with severe studies and contemplations, or hindered by bodily pains or weakness. But yet their grave and sober comforts, their peace of conscience, and settled hopes, and trust in God, delivering them from the terrors of death and hell, may convince an unbeliever that this is a far better state than the mirth and laughter of fools in the house of feasting, and in the vanities of a short prosperity. The grave and solid peace and comfort of those that have made their calling and election sure is more convincing than a lighter kind of mirth; John xvi. 22.

VI. The dominion of love in the hearts of Christians, appearing in all the course of their lives, doth much glorify God and their religion; I mean a common, hearty love to all men, and a special love to holy men, according to their various degrees of loveliness. Love is a thing so agreeable to right reason, and to social nature, and to the common interest of all mankind, that all men commend it; and they that have it not for others, would have it from others. Who is it that loveth not to be loved? and who is it that loveth not the man that he is convinced loveth him, better than him that hateth him, or regardeth him not? And do you think that the same course, which maketh men hate yourselves, is like to make them love your religion? Love is the powerful conqueror of the world: by it God conquereth the enmity of man, and reconcileth to himself even malignant sinners; and by it he hath taught us to conquer all the tribulations and persecutions by which the world would separate us from his love; yea, and to be more than conquerors through him that loved us, and thereby did kindle in us our reflecting love, (Rom. viii. 34-36.) and by it he hath

instructed us to go on to conquer both his enemies and our own; yea, to conquer the enmity rather than the enemy, in imitation of himself, who saveth the sinner, and kills the sin; and this is the most noble kind of victory. Every soldier can end a fever, or other disease, by cutting a man's throat, and ending his life; but it is the work of the physician to kill the disease, and save the man. The scandalous pastor is for curing heresy in the Roman way, by silencing sound preachers, and tormenting and burning the supposed heretics; or, at least, to trust for the acceptance and success of his labors to the sword; and if that which will restrain men from crossing the pastor, would restrain them from resisting the Spirit of God, and constrain them to the love of holiness, it were well; then the glory of conversion should be more ascribed to the magistrate and soldier than to the preacher. But the true pastor is armed with a special measure of life, light, and love, that he may be a meet instrument for the regenerating of souls, who, by holy life, and light, and love, must be renewed to their Father's image. Every thing naturally generateth its like, which hath a generative power. And it is the love of God which the preacher is to bring all men to, that must be saved: this is his office, this is his work, and this must be his study; he doth little or nothing, if he doth not this. Souls are not sanctified till they are wrought up to the love of God and holiness. And, therefore, the furniture and arms which Christ hath left us in his word, are all suited to this work of love. We have the love of God himself to preach to them; and the love of an humbled, dying, and glorified Redeemer, and all the amiable blessings of heaven and earth to open to them; and all the loving promises and invitations of the gospel; and must not our hearts, our ministry, and our lives be answerable to all this? Believe it, it must be a preacher, whose matter and manner of preaching and living doth show forth a hearty love to God, and love to godliness, and love to all his people's souls, that is the fit instrument to glorify God, by convincing and converting sinners. God can work by what means he will; by a scandalous, domineering, self-seeking preacher; but it is not his ordinary way. Foxes and wolves are not nature's instruments to generate sheep. I never knew much good done to souls by any pastors but such as preached and lived in the power of love, working by clear, convincing light, and both managed by a holy, lively seriousness. You must bring fire if you kindle fire. Trust not here to the Cartesian philosophy, that mere motion will turn another element into fire. Speak as loud as you will, and make as great a stir as you will, it will be all in vain to win men's love to God and goodness, till their hearts be touched with his love and amiableness; which, usually, must be done by the instrumentality of the preacher's love.

Let them hate me, so they do but fear me, and obey me, is the saying of such as set up for themselves, (and but foolishly for themselves,) and, like Satan, would rule men to damnation. If love be the sum and fulfilling of the law, love must be the sum and fulfilling of our ministry. But yet, by love I mean not flattery; parents do love as necessarily as any, and yet must correct; and God himself can love, and yet correct; yea, he chasteneth every son that he receiveth; (Heb. xii. 6, 7.) and his love consisteth with paternal justice, and with hatred of sin, and plain and sharp reproof of sinners; and so must ours; but all as the various operations of love, as the objects vary.

And what I say of ministers, I say of every Christian in this place. Love is the great and the new commandment; that is, the last which Christ would leave, at his departure, to his disciples. O, could we learn of the Lord of love, and him who calleth himself love itself, to love our enemies, to bless them that curse us, and to do good to the evil, and pray for them that hurt and persecute us, we should not only prove that we are genuine Christians, the children of our heavenly Father; (Matt. v. 44, 45.) but should heap coals of fire on our enemies' heads, and melt them into compassion and some remorse, if not into a holy love. I tell you, it is the Christian who doth truly love his neighbor as himself; who loveth the godly as his co-heirs of heaven, and loveth the ungodly with a desire to make them truly godly; who loveth a friend as a friend, and an enemy as a man that is capable of holiness and salvation. It is he that liveth, walketh, speaketh, converseth, yea, suffereth, which is the great difficulty in love, and is, as it were, turned, by the love of God shed abroad upon his heart, into love itself; who doth glorify God in the world, and glorify his religion, and really rebuke the blasphemer, that derideth the Spirit in believers, as if it were but a fanatical dream.

And it is he that, by tyranny, cruelty, contempt of others, and needless, proud singularities and separations, magisterially condemning and vilifying all that walk not in his fashion, and pray not in his fashion, and are not of his opinion, where, it is like enough, he is himself mistaken, that is the scandalous Christian, who doth as much against God and religion, and the church, and men's souls, as he doth against love. And though it be Satan's way, as an angel of light, and his ministers' way, as ministers of righteousness, to destroy Christ's interest by dividing it, and separating things that God will have conjoined, and so to pretend the love of truth, and love of order, as the love of godliness, or discipline, against the love of souls, and to use even the name of love itself against love, to justify all their cruelties, or censures, and alienations; yet God will keep up that sacred fire in the hearts of the sound Chris-

tians which shall live and conquer these temptations, and they will understand and regard the warning of the Holy Ghost; Rom. xvi. 17. "I beseech you, mark them which cause divisions and offenses, contrary to the doctrine which you have learned, and avoid them," (in their sinful, dividing, offensive ways,) "for they that are such serve not the Lord Jesus," (though they may confidently think they do,) "but their own bellies," or carnal interests, though, perhaps, they will not see it in themselves; "and by good words, and fair, or flattering speeches, deceive the hearts of the simple." The word is *τῶν ἀκάρων*, hominum minime malorum, no bad men, or harmless, well-meaning men; who, in case it be not to mortal errors, perhaps may be, in the main, sincere, and may be saved when their stubble is burnt; but whether sincere or not, they are scandals in the world, and great dishonourers of God, and serve Satan when they little think so, in all that they do contrary to that universal love, by which God must be glorified and sinners overcome.

VII. A public mind that is set upon doing good, as the work of his life, and that with sincere and evident self-denial, doth greatly glorify God in the world. As God maketh his goodness known to us by doing good, so, also, must his children do. Nothing is more communicative than goodness and love; nothing will more certainly make itself known whenever there is opportunity. That a worldly, barren love, which doth not help, and succor, and do good, is no true Christian love, St. James hath told us fully in his detection of a dead and barren faith. No man, in reason, can expect that others should take him for a good man, for something that is known to no one but himself, save only that public converse and communion must be kept up by the charitable belief of professions, till they are disproved. The tree is known by its fruits, and the fruits best by the taste, though the sight may give some lower degree of commendation. The character of Christ's purified, peculiar people, is, that they are zealous of good works; Tit. ii. 14. The scandalous Christian may be zealous against others, and zealous to hurt them, to persecute them, to censure them, to disparage them, and to avoid them; but the genuine Christian is zealous in loving them, and doing them all the good he can. To do a little good upon the by, and from a full table to send an alms to Lazarus at the door, yea, to give to the needy as much as the flesh can spare, without any suffering to itself, or any abatement of its grandeur, pomp, and pleasure in the world, will prove you to be men not utterly void of all compassion, but it will never prove you to be Christians, nor better than infidels and heathens. Look not that men should think you better than your fruits do manifest you to be, nor that they take you to be good for saying

that you are good, nor judge you to excel others any further than your works are better than others. And marvel not if the world ask, 'What do you more than others?' when Christ himself doth ask the same; Matt. v. 47. "If ye salute your brethren, and those of your own opinion and way, and if ye love them that love you, and say as ye say, do not even publicans and infidels do the same?" Matt. v. 46. Marvel not if men judge you according to your works, when God himself will do so, who knoweth the heart. He that is all for himself, may love himself, and think well of himself, but must not expect much love from others. Selfishness is the bile or imposthume of societies, where the blood and spirits have an inordinate afflux, till their corruption torment or gangrene the part. While men are all for themselves, and would draw all to themselves, instead of loving their neighbor as themselves, and the public good above themselves, they do but hurt and destroy themselves, for they forfeit their communion with the body, and deserve that none should care for them, who care for none but themselves. To a genuine Christian, another's good rejoiceth him as if it were his own, (and how much, then, hath such an one continually to feed his joy,) and he is careful to supply another's wants as if they were his own. But the scandalous, selfish hypocrite doth live quietly, and sleep easily, if he be but well himself, and it go well with his party, however it go with all his neighbors, or with the church, or with the world. To himself he is fallen; to himself he liveth; himself he loveth; himself he seeketh; and himself, that is, his temporal prosperity, he will advance and save, if he can, whatever his religion be; and yet himself he destroyeth, and will lose. It is not well considered in the world, how much of sin consisteth in the narrow contraction of men's love, and regard unto their natural selves, and how much of goodness consisteth in a community of love, and what a glory it is to the government and laws of God that he maketh it so noble and necessary a part of every man's duty to love all men, and to do good to all, as he is able, though with a difference. God could do us all good enough by himself alone, without one another. But what a mercy is it to the world, that as many persons as there are, so many there are obliged by God to love their neighbors as themselves, and to do good to all about them! And what a mercy is it to the actor that God will thus make him the instrument and messenger of his beneficence!

Ministers and Christians all, would you be thought better than others? Are you angry with men that think otherwise of you? What good do you more than others in your places? What good do you that other men can see, and feel, and taste, and judge of? Every man loveth himself, and can feel what doeth him good, in natural things; and God, by giving you food, and other mercies to

your bodies, would have you, therein, taste his love to your souls, would use you just so for your brethren's good. Do you give them good words and counsel? It is well. But that is not it that they can yet taste and value. You must do that sort of good for them which they can know and relish; not that this will save them, or is any great matter of itself, no more than God's common bodily mercies to you; but this is the best way to get down better. And he that seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up the bowels of his compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him? 1 John iii. 17. "Give to him that asketh, and from him that would borrow of thee turn not thou away;" Matt. v. 42. That is, let not want of charity hinder thee, at any time, from giving, though want of ability may hinder thee, and prudence may restrain thee, and must guide thee. If you say, Alas! we have it not to give. I answer, 1. Do what you can. 2. Show by your compassion, that you would, if you could, take care of your poor brethren. 3. Beg of others for them, and put on those that can to do it.

Say not, These carnal people value nothing but carnal things, and cannot perceive a man's love by spiritual benefits; for it is not grace, but the means and outside of things spiritual that you can give them; and, for aught I see, the most of us all do very hardly believe God's own love to us, if he deny us bodily mercies. If you languish in poverty, crosses, and painful sickness any thing long, your murmuring sheweth that you do not sufficiently taste God's goodness without the help of bodily sense. And can you expect that natural men believe you to be good for your bare words, when you so hardly think well of God himself, though he promise you life eternal, unless he also give you bodily supplies?

VIII. He that will glorify his religion, and God, before men, must be strictly just in all his dealings; just in governing, just in trading and bargaining, just to superiors and to inferiors, to friends and to enemies, just in performing all his promises, and in giving every man his right. He that, in love, must part with his own right for his neighbor's greater good, must not deprive another of his right; for charity includeth justice, as a lower virtue is included in a higher and more perfect. He must not be unjust for himself, for riches, or any worldly ends; he must not be unjust for friends or kindred; he must not be drawn to it by fear or flattery; no price must hire them to do an unrighteous deed. But, above all, he must never be unjust as for religion, as if God either needed or countenanced a lie, or any iniquity. No men are more scandalous dishonourers of religion, and of God, than they that think it lawful to deceive, or lie, or be perjured, or break covenants, or be rebellious, or use any sinful means to secure or promote religion, as if God were not able to accomplish his ends by righteous means.

This cometh from atheism and unbelief, when men think that God will lose his cause, unless our wits and sinful shifts preserve it, as if we, and not he, were the rulers of the world. The unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God, (1 Cor. vi. 9.) and seldom escape the hatred or contempt of men.

IX. He that will glorify God, must know and observe the order of commands and duties, and that God will have mercy, and not sacrifice, and must prefer the end before the means as such. He must not pretend a lesser duty against a greater, nor take the lesser at that time for a duty, but for a sin, when the greater should take place. God hath made his laws and our duty to be the means of our own good. It is no profaneness, but duty, to omit that which else would be a duty, when a greater is to be preferred. God calls it the sacrifice of a fool, who knoweth not that he doeth evil under the name of duty, when sacrifice is preferred before an obedient hearing of God's commands; Eccles. v. 1—3. It was no want of holy zeal in Christ, which made him bid the unreconciled, "Leave thy gift at the altar, and first go and be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift;" Matt. v. 24. Some zealous persecutors, censurers, and dividers, now, would think I speak like an ungodly person if I should say to them, 'Let your liturgy, and your prayers, and your worship stay till you have confessed and lamented your injuries to your brethren, and then come and offer your service to God, and lift up pure hands to him, without wrath and doubting.' Yet is it no more than God often calls for to the hypocritical Jews; Isa. i. 11, &c. "To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices, when ye come and appear before me? Who hath required this at your hands to tread in my courts? Bring no more vain oblations; incense is an abomination to me. When ye spread forth your hands, I will hide mine eyes; when ye make many prayers, I will not hear. Your hands are full of blood. Wash you, make you clean, relieve the oppressed;" Isa. lviii. 2, 3, &c. "They seek me daily, and delight to know my ways, as a nation that did righteousness and forsook not the ordinances of their God; they ask of me the ordinances of justice; they take delight in approaching to God. Wherefore have we fasted, and thou seest not? Have we afflicted our soul, and thou takest no knowledge? Ye fast for strife and debate, and to smite with the fist of wickedness. Ye shall not fast as this day, to make your voice to be heard on high. Is it such a fast that I have chosen? A day for a man to afflict his soul? to bow down his head as a bulrush, and to spread sackcloth and ashes under him? Wilt thou call this a fast, and an acceptable day to the Lord? Is not this the fast that I have chosen? to loose the bands of wickedness, and to let the oppressed

go free, and that ye break every yoke? Is it not to deal thy bread to the hungry, and that thou bring the poor that are cast out, to thy house? When thou seest the naked, that thou cover him, and that thou hide not thyself from thy own flesh? Then shall thy light break forth as the morning, and thy health shall spring forth speedily, and thy righteousness shall go before thee, and the glory of the Lord shall be thy reward. Then shalt thou call, and the Lord shall answer; thou shalt cry, and he shall say, Here I am."

It is a point that our Lord Jesus layeth a great stress upon. He purposely healeth on the Sabbath day, and tells the censorious Pharisees "the Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath;" that is, the end, which is man's good, is to be preferred before the means; nay, it is no means, and so no duty, which is against it. He defendeth his disciples for getting themselves food as they passed in the corn-fields; and he teacheth them the lawfulness of the priest's labor on the Sabbath, and of David's eating the shew bread; and at two several times doth tell them that God "will have mercy, and not sacrifice;" and biddeth them "go learn what that meaneth;" Matt. iv. 13. and xii. 7.

And it is not only Pharisees, but many better men, who have need to go learn the meaning of that sentence. The meaning is this, that (*ceteris paribus*) the great duties of the law of nature, are to take place before the positive institutions. God's institutions are for man's good; whatever is a duty is also a means to the happiness of man, and pleasing to God, which is the end of all. Love to God and man are greater than all the instituted means of them as such; therefore that is no duty which is no means, or is against the instituter's end. Preaching and prayer must be omitted for some works of love and human good. Discipline is a duty, when it is a means to the end for which it is ordained; but when it would hinder or destroy that end, (the reputation of religion, and the glory of God's holiness, and the church's good,) it is no duty, but a sin. To omit a sacrament, to break the rest of the Lord's day, to forbear the sacred assemblies, may be a duty when the good of men requireth them. Ordination is a duty when it is a means to its proper end. But if it were pleaded against those ends, and order set against the thing ordered, even the work of the ministry, the case would be altered.

When men mistake, and mistime, and misplace God's institutions, to the excluding of the great moral duties, which are their end, and persuade men to that as a part of religion, which would certainly do more hurt than good, they scandalously drive men away from their religion. Thus imprudent, scandalous professors can backbite and reproach others, and make them odious, and destroy

Christian love, and peace, and concord, on pretense of zeal for order, government, ceremonies, forms, or for this or that mode of discipline or worship. Not having learned what this meaneth, "I will have mercy and not sacrifice;" nor that forms and external institutions were made for man, and not man for them. And yet I know that this will not justify the Familist or hypocrite, who thinks he may do any thing to save his flesh.

Do you think it is not a scandal to Turks, or other infidels, tempting them to deride or hate Christianity, to find the Papists placing their merits in hurtful pilgrimages, which waste that time which should be spent, and in a multitude of unprofitable ceremonies, and in unwholesome food, and injuries to health, under the names of abstinence and mortification? By this rule they may next persuade us, that it will please God if men famish or hang themselves; and, consequently, if they do so by others, for we must love our neighbor but as ourselves. God himself hath made all our religion so suitable to our good, that he expecteth not that we should take any thing for our duty, but what he giveth us evidence in the thing, or security by his promise, shall be our gain. He that worketh upon self-love, and winneth man by a Savior, and a glorious reward, and proveth the goodness of all his word and ways, as to our happiness, hath instituted none of his ordinances to our hurt. The apostles had their power only to edification, and not the destruction or hurt of souls; 2 Cor. x. 8. and xiii. 10. "Let all things be done to edifying" (1 Cor. xiv. 26.) is a word of greater comprehension and use than many do conceive. When it is against edification, it is not acceptable to God. One would think Christ had broken his own law of discipline when he did familiarly eat with publicans and sinners; and yet that very act of his is one of those which he justifieth by the aforesaid rule, "I will have mercy, and not sacrifice;" Matt. ix. 11—13. Learn this lesson of preferring mercy before sacrifice, if ever you will glorify God.

The right manner of worshiping God is of great moment to the honor of him and of our religion before the world; that we give no false descriptions of God, or dishonorable attributes; that we teach no dishonorable doctrine as his, especially of his own will and counsels, and of his government, laws, and judgment; that we neither take down the glory of the gospel mysteries, by reducing them to the rank of common providence, nor yet be deceived by Satan or his ministers, as the promoters of light and righteousness, (2 Cor. xi. 15.) to abuse and dishonor them by overdoing; that we seek not to glorify God by our lies, or by our own mistaken interpretations or inventions. God must be worshiped as a Spirit, in spirit and truth, and not with Popish toys and fopperies, which make others think that our religion is but like a puppet

play and ludicrous device, to keep the people in servitude to the priests by a blind devotion. God must be worshiped rationally, and with holy wisdom, and not with childish shadows and trifles, nor with slovenly and imprudent words, which tend to breed in the hearers derision or contempt. Neither the cantings or scenical actions, or affected repetitions of the Papists, nor the rude, disorderly, incongruous expressions of unskillful men, are fit to be offered to the glorious God. Prudence, and holiness, and seriousness, and reverence, must appear in that worship which must honor God. O, with what holiness should we hear from and speak to the holy, holy, holy God! who will be sanctified in all that draw near him, (Lev. x. 3.) and will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain! They that will do it acceptably must serve him with reverence and godly fear, (Heb. xii. 23.) as knowing that he is a "consuming fire;" and yet with alacrity, love, and delight, as knowing that in his favor is life, and that he is the infinitely amiable good, the hope and only portion of believers.

XI. The humility, meekness, and patience of Christians are greatly necessary to their glorifying of God. I join all three together for brevity's sake.

1. It is a thing very amiable in the eyes of all, when men have not too high thoughts of themselves, and seek not to be overvalued by others, either as great, or wise, or good. When they seek not precedency, preferment or honor, but take the lowest place, and envy not the precedence or honor of others, but take another's honor as their own, and take another to be fitter (*cæteris paribus*) for places of power, trust, or eminency, than themselves. When they do, according to the measure of their worth, honor all men, (1 Pet. ii. 17.) "And are kindly affectioned one to another in brotherly love, in honor preferring one another;" (Rom. xii. 10.) not dissemblingly and complimentally saying, 'Your servant, sir,' while they would fain have others below them, and to be obedient to their wills. But really to think meanly of their own worth and wisdom; Rom. xii. 3. "For I say, through the grace given to me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think soberly, as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith. Not thinking himself something when he is nothing;" (Gal. vi. 3.) nor to be more learned, or wise, or pious than he is. We must be, indeed, his disciples, who "humbled himself, and made himself of no reputation;" (Phil. ii. 7, 8.) and wiped and washed the feet of his disciples, to teach them what to be and do to one another; who hath taught us the necessity of cross-bearing and self-denial, and to humble ourselves as little children, if ever we will enter into the

kingdom of heaven; (Matt. xvi. 24. and xviii. 3, 4.) and hath decreed and foretold us that whosoever shall exalt himself shall be abased, and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted; and therefore the greatness which his ministers must seek must be to be the servants of the rest; Matt. xxiii. 11—13. "Honor shall uphold the humble in spirit, but a man's pride shall bring him low;" Prov. xxix. 23. "Better is it to be of an humble spirit with the lowly, than to divide the spoils with the proud;" Prov. xvi. 19. He that will honor his religion must "put on, as the elect of God, bowels of mercy, kindness, humbleness of mind, (not of tongue only,) meekness, long-suffering, forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any;" Col. iii. 12, 13. He must not set out himself like the richest, and desire to seem high or notable to others, nor set up himself with his superiors, nor swell or grudge, if he be not regarded or taken notice of; no, nor if he be reprov'd or dishonored; but must learn of an humbled Christ to be meek and lowly; (Matt. xi. 29.) and must not mind or desire high things, but condescend to men of low estate, and not be wise in his own conceit; Rom. xii. 16. "I beseech you, therefore, that you walk worthy the vocation wherewith ye are called, with all lowliness and meekness, with long-suffering, forbearing one another in love;" Eph. iv. 1, 2. "Let nothing be done through strife or vain-glory, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than themselves;" Phil. ii. 3. What man loveth not such a spirit and conversation? O that it were more common and eminent among us; and then we should find that the disaffection of the ignorant would be much abated, and that when a man's ways thus please God, his enemies will be the more at peace with him; Prov. xvi. 7. But when they are proud, and we are proud, and we cannot yield, nor bow, nor give place to the wrathful, but must jostle and contend with them for our place and honor, we lose our Christian honor by seeking carnal honor, and appear to be but like other men; and even the proud themselves will disdain the proud.

2. And though we may be angry and not sin, and must be plain and zealous against sin, and for God; though guilty, galled sinners be displeased by it, yet meekness must be our temperature; for a turbulent, rough, unquiet spirit is displeasing both to God and man: such persons have seldom peace with others or themselves. "A meek and quiet spirit is, in the sight of God, of great price;" 1 Pet. iii. 4. "Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth; they shall speed better than others, even in this world;" Matt. v. 5. "The wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits."

Paul tells us what the good works are which we must be always ready to; "To speak evil of no man, to be no brawlers; but gentle, showing all meekness to all men;" Tit. iii. 1, 2. The Scripture speaks more of this than I have leisure to recite. See Gal. v. 23. and vi. 1. 1 Tim. vi. 11. 2 Tim. ii. 25. 1 Peter iii. 15. Jam. iii. 13. Zeph. ii. 3. Isa. xxix. 19. Psalm cxli. 4. and lxxvi. 9. and cxlvii. 6. and xxxvii. 11.

3. And patience both towards God and man is a necessary companion of humility and meekness. This greatly differeth from natural dullness and an insensible temperature. When a man's soul is partly so much awed by God's authority and presence, and partly so much taken up with the great matters of his service, and partly so much contented with his favor and grace, and the hopes of glory, as to make light of all the interests of the flesh as such; and therefore to bear patiently such losses and crosses, and wants and sufferings, as touch the flesh, as taking it for no great matter to lose all the world if we save our souls, this is true patience by which God is glorified. For by this men will see that Christians have, indeed, such great things in their hopes, as set them quite above the transitory things of the flesh and the world; but when they are much troubled at every cross and loss, and whine and complain as if they were undone, if they live in poverty and reproach; and are at their wit's end in every danger, and fret and storm at every ill word, or every one that wrongeth them, they are the shame of their profession, and scandals to the world. It is not a sudden anger which is the great sin of impatience; but an impotent disability to suffer in the flesh, in estate or name, and a repining under every want, which sheweth a fleshly, worldly mind, and a want of true believing the heavenly felicity; though I confess that pity must make some excuse for many poor women, whose natural temper maketh their passions, troubles, and fears invincible. He that said, "In your patience possess your souls," doth intimate, that we have lost ourselves, and the government, order, and peace of our souls, when we have lost our patience; Luke xxi. 19. See Eccl. vii. 8. Jam. v. 7, 8. 1 Pet. ii. 20. 1 Thes. v. 14. "Be patient towards all men." 1 Tim. vi. 11. Col. i. 11. Whatever zeal you seem to have in prayer, in preaching, and for purity of worship, if you can bear wants, and sickness, and the loss of all the world no better than others, you will appear no better in their eyes; for "if you faint in the day of adversity, your strength is small;" Prov. xx. 10.

XII. And as a special fruit of humility, an easy and thankful bearing of reproof, and readiness to confess a fault upon due conviction, is a necessary duty to the honoring of God. It will show men that you are enemies to sin indeed, and that you are not hyp-

ocrites, who weed not only their neighbors' fields, and see the mote in another's eye, and not the beam which is in your own. "If the righteous smite us by reproofs, it must be taken as a kindness, and as a precious balsam, which doth not break our head, but heal us ; Psalm cxli. 5. Not that we are bound to belie ourselves in compliance with every man's censorious humor that will accuse us ; but we must be readier to censure ourselves than others, and readier to confess a fault, than to expect a confession from others whom we reprove. Sincerity and serious repentance will be honorable in that person who is most careful to avoid sin, and most ready penitently to confess it when he hath been overcome, and truly thankful to those that call him to repentance ; as being more desirous that God, and his laws and religion, have the glory of their holiness, than that he himself should have the undue glory of innocency, and escape the deserved shame of his sin.

It is one of the most dangerous diseases of professors, and greatest scandals of this age, that persons taken for eminently religious are more impatient of plain (though just) reproof, than many a drunkard, swearer, or fornicator ; and when they have spent hours or days in the seeming earnest confession of their sin, and lament before God and man that they cannot do it with more grief and tears, yet they take it for a heinous injury in another that will say half so much against them, and take him for a malignant enemy of the godly who will call them as they call themselves. They look that the chief business of a preacher should be to praise them, and set them above the rest, as the only people of God ; and they take him for an enemy that will tell them the truth. But the scandal is greatest in those preachers themselves, who cannot endure to hear that they are sinners. So tender and impatient of reproof are some, yea, some that for their learning, and preaching, and piety, are ranked in the highest form, or expect to be so, that almost nothing but flattery or praise can please them ; and they can hardly bear the gentlest reproof, no, nor a contradiction of any of their opinions ; but they seem to tell men that it is their part and privilege to be the reprovers of others, and to have no reprover, and to tell other men of sin and be themselves accounted innocent ; and to call other men to repentance for particular sins, while they themselves must have no other repentance than in general to say that they are sinners ; and to proclaim to all that their public confessions are formalities, and that it is a Christ to heal the souls of others that they preach, while they acknowledge but little work for his remedies on themselves. But he that "refuseth reproof doth err, and he that hateth it is brutish," however learned, or reverend, or pious he would be accounted ; Prov. xi. 17. and xii. 1. "He that regardeth reproof is prudent, and he that hateth it shall

die;" Prov. xv. 5—10. As ready, humble, penitent confession of sin doth tend to our pardon from God, so doth it tend to our acceptance with man. When God and man will condemn the Pharisee, that justifies himself till confession be extorted from him.

XIII. It is another very honorable fruit of humility to have a learning disposition, and not to be magisterial; and to be swift to hear, and slow to speak. All Christ's disciples must be as little children, (Matt. xviii. 3, 4.) especially in a learning, teachable disposition, a child doth not use to set his wit against his master's, or any other that will teach him, nor to rise up against instruction, as a disputer that must have the better, and be accounted the wisest, but his daily business is submissively to learn. A genuine Christian is indeed communicative, and willing that others should partake with him in the wisdom and happiness which God hath revealed to him. But he is ready first to learn himself, and knoweth that he must receive before he can communicate: and there is none so far below him but he is willing to hear and learn of; but especially among his equals he is readier to hear and learn than to teach, because he is still conscious of his ignorance, and honoreth the gifts of God in others, which the proud despise; Jam. iii. 1. and i. 19.

But the scandalous Christian is so wise in his own eyes, that he is ever of a teaching humor, and those please him best that will sit and hear, and reverence him as an oracle, and magnify every word that drops from his lips. He is so full of himself, that he hath scarce the patience to observe well what another speaks or writeth; and so valueth his own conceptions, that he thinks they should be valued by the hearers: and so scandalous is the teaching humor of some learned men, that they have not the common good manners or civility to suffer another to speak to the end, but they must needs interrupt him, that they may speak, as being more worthy. They take other men's speeches to be so tedious, that their patience cannot hold out the length of them. I mean not that a wise man is bound to lose his time in hearing every self-conceited person talk; but when men are engaged in conference, or disputes, for a man to have such list to speak, that he cannot stay till another (though long) come to the end, is a scandalous incivility; yea, some can scarce stay till two or three sentences be uttered, but their haste must tell you that they take themselves to be much the wiser, and to be fitter to teach than to hear and learn. And they are so overladen with their own conceited wisdom, that they can carry it no longer without some vent; and so full of their own, that they have no room to receive any more from others; and being all masters, they receive from God and man the greater condemnation; James iii. 1. Prov. xii. 17. and i. 5. and xviii. 13.

XIV. The genuine Christian hateth backbiting, and disgraceful reports of others, and yet can bear it from others to himself. He hath learned to love all, and to speak evil of no man, nor to receive or vend ill reports of others. He knoweth that this is the work of the devil, the mortal enemy of love. He modestly rebuketh the backbiting tongue, and, with an angry countenance, driveth it away; Psalm xv. 3. Tit. iii. 2. Prov. xxv. 23. Backbiters tell us that they are haters of men; and the apostle joins them with haters of God; Rom. i. 30. Debates, backbitings, whisperings, envyings, are the scandalous Christian's work; 2 Cor. xii. 20. He that heareth them will either distaste them, or catch the disease, and be as bad as they. And he that heareth that he is calumniated or reproached by them behind his back is tempted to abhor both them and their profession. But to deal with men as faithful friends, and in plainness (but with prudence and love) to tell them secretly of their defects and faults, this tendeth to good, and to reconcile the minds of men, at last, and to the honor of the Christian way; Matt. xviii. 15, 16. Levit. xix. 17. Prov. ix. 8. and xxiv. 25. and xxvii. 5. Eccl. vii. 5. Prov. xxviii. 23.

But yet, when we are belied and reproached of ourselves, though by Christians, or teachers, or superiors, it beseebeth us not to make too great a matter of it, as being tender of our own reputation, but only to be sorry for the slanderer's or backbiter's sin and misery. For men's corruption will have vent; the angry, and malicious, and envious, will speak from the abundance of their hearts; and the guilty will be tender; and children will cry and quarrel; and proud contenders will be impatient. And how small a matter is it, as to us, to be judged of man, who must all be shortly judged of the Lord!

XV. He is one that would keep open to the notice of all the great difference between the godly and the wicked; and aspireth after the highest degrees of holiness, as knowing the corruptions and calamities of the weak, and how much of heaven is in holiness itself; and yet he loveth, honoreth, and cherisheth the least spark of grace in the weakest Christian; and is none of them that censoriously despise such, nor that tyrannically tread them down, or cast them injuriously out of the church.

1. To make men believe that there is little difference between the holy and profane, is to bring all religion into contempt, and is a wickedness which God's laws throughout condemn, and his judgment shall publicly confute; Matt. iii. 18. 2 Thess. i. 6—11. Jude 15. Matt. xiii. 25. throughout.

2. To take up with a little goodness, which consisteth with scandalous corruptions, is to be a scandal in the church.

3. And yet to be supercilious, and to disdain the weak, or shut out any as ungodly, whom Christ hath not warranted us to shut out, and to make stricter rules of trial and church communion than he hath made, this is justly displeasing both to God and man. It tempteth men to abhor that religion which tendeth more to men's reproach than to their cure, and causeth professors to set themselves higher above the weak, and at a greater distance from their neighbors than God would have them. Christ is tender of little ones, and would not have them scandalized. His own apostles were very low in knowledge all the time that he was with them on earth. It is not mere want of words that will warrant us to take men for ungodly; even he that is "weak in faith must be received, but not to doubtful disputations;" Rom. xiv. 15. To cull out a few that have learned to speak better than the rest, and shut out with the dogs all the infant Christians, who must be fed with milk, because they want expressions, is one of Satan's ways of overdoing, by which he would banish religion out of the world.

XVI. He that will glorify God by his good works must be zealous and diligent in them, and make them the serious business of his life; he must live so that men may see that indeed he doth believe and hope for heaven. That which a man coldly speaks of, and coldly seeketh, men will think he coldly desireth; and therefore that he doth but doubtingly believe it. A cold, slothful Christian proclaims his unbelief to others, and so inviteth them to the like. When Christians bestir themselves, as for their lives, and ply God's work with greatest diligence, and redeem their lives, as knowing that all is short enough to prepare for an endless life, this wakeneth others to life and thoughtfulness, to inquire into the matter of our hopes.

XVII. He that will glorify God must be wise and watchful, to see and take the opportunities of good before they are passed by, and to avoid temptations to error and iniquity, and especially temerity in matters of great and public consequences.

1. Good works have their season. You lose them if you take them not in their time; that may be done now, which, if you pass this time, you can never do.

2. Temptations have their season, and must just then be resisted, lest many a year repair not an hour's loss; and they are very many; and narrow-sighted, careless persons, who avoid two and fall into the third, or avoid nineteen and are conquered by the twentieth, are always scandalous.

3. And rash adventures on any opinions or actions, but especially of public consequence, are usually most scandalous and pernicious to the church. As in military affairs, and in physic, *ubi non licet bis errare*, men's lives must pay for our temerity and ex-

ror, and all the world cannot remedy the effects of one mistake; so in matters of religion, if we mistake by our rash conceitedness, and take not time for necessary trial, and proceed not, as a man on the ice, or among quicksands, with great care and deliberation, the shaking of kingdoms, the ruin of churches, the silencing of ministers, the corruption of doctrine, worship, and discipline, and the sin and damnation of many souls, may be the effect of our proud presumption and temerity; but the humble, self-suspecting man, that suspendeth his judgment and practice till he hath thoroughly proved all, doth preserve the honor of religion, and avoid such late and dear repentance.

XVIII. The man whose works shall glorify God, must be devoted to the unity and concord of believers, and be greatly averse to dividing and love-killing opinions, words, and practices; and, as much as in him lies, he must live peaceably with all men; 1 Cor. i. 10. Phil. ii. 1—3. Eph. iv. 3, 4, 14, 15, 16. Rom. xvi. 17. and xii. 18. 1 Thess. v. 17. John xvii. 24. When Paul saith that “Dividers serve not the Lord Jesus, but their own bellies,” he intimateth to us, that though truth and purity be in their mouths, and really intended by them, as they take it, yet there is usually a secret self-interest that is carried on, that biaseth the judgment. And when he telleth them, (Acts xx. 30.) that “of their own selves should men arise, speaking perverse things,” which they called (and it is like believed to be) the truth; yet self-interest lay at the bottom, to be somebody in drawing disciples after them; for it is so notorious a truth, that unity and concord are indispensably necessary to the church, as it is to our body, to families, to kingdoms, that men could not do so destructive a thing as dividing is, if some sin had not first caused the error of their minds. It greatly honoreth Christ and religion in the world, when believers live in love and unity: and their discords and divisions have in all ages been the scandal of the world, and the great reproach and dishonor of the church. When Christ’s disciples are one in him, it is the way to the infidel world’s conversion, that they may believe that the Father sent him; Job xvii. 24.

And here the devil has two sorts of servants: 1. The true schismatic, or heretic, who fearlessly and blindly divideth the churches. 2. The overdoing Papist, and church-tyrant, who will have a greater unity than Christ will here give us, that so we may have none. And when Christ prays that we may be one in him, the pope saith that we shall also be one in him, or we shall be accounted schismatics, and destroyed as such. And when the ancient church, according to Christ’s institution, united all in the baptismal covenant, explained in the creed, and Paul numbereth the necessary terms of unity; Eph. iv. 4—6. 1. One body (or church of

Christ) into which we are baptized. 2. One spirit of holiness in all. 3. One hope of the glorious reward. 4. One Lord by whom we do attain it. 5. One faith, even Christian verity. 6. One baptism, or covenant of Christianity. 7. And one God and Father of all. And in these God would have all his servants to be one; then come in these overdoers, and they must have us to be all one in all their Papal policy, and all the decrees of their pope and Councils *de Fide*, and in their multitude of corruptions, and ceremonious impositions; which is as much as to say, 'You shall have no unity;' for he that saith to all the city or kingdom, You shall be destroyed for discord, or reproached as dividers, if you are not all of one complexion, or have not all the same appetite, age, or bodily stature, doth pronounce reproach or destruction on them absolutely: so is it with all others that put their self-devised terms on their brethren as necessary to unity and peace, on how pious or fair pretenses soever; impossible conditions make the thing impossible. These are the church-tearing scandals. These are the snares by which Satan hath made the church a scorn, and our religion a stumbling-block to Turks and heathens; but had the peace-makers been heard, who learned of the Holy Ghost (Acts xv.) to impose nothing on the brethren but necessary things, and who have labored to revive love, and shame emulations and divisions, God had been more glorified by men, and the reproach of the churches and solemn assemblies taken away. When all sects and parties have bustled and raised a dust in the world to foul the church, and to blind each other, if ever the church's glory be restored, and our shame taken away, it will be by men of love and peace, by healing, uniting, reconciling principles and means.

XIX. He that will glorify God must live in and to the will of God, and seek to reduce his own will wholly into God's, and to destroy in himself all will that striveth against God's will.

1. The disposing will of God, our owner, must be absolutely submitted to, and the bounteous will of God, our benefactor, thankfully and joyfully acknowledged.

2. The ruling will of God, our lawgiver, must be with daily study and care obeyed, and his punishing and rewarding justice glorified.

3. The final felicitating will and love of God, our ultimate end and object, that we may please him, and be everlastingly pleased in him, love him, and be loved by him, must be totally desired and sought, as the only and perfect rest of souls.

O! that is the holy, the joyful, the honorable Christian, who daily laboreth, and in some good measure doth prevail, to have no will but the will of God, and that which wholly is resolved into it; who looketh no further to know what he should do, but to know

by his word what is the law or will of God: who believeth that all that God willeth is good, and had rather have his life, and health, and wealth, and friends, at God's will and disposal, than his own; who knoweth that God's will is love itself, and that to please him is the end of all the world, and the only felicity of men and angels; and resteth wholly in the pleasing of that will. What can be more wise and just than to have the same will (objectively) with him who is infinitely wise and just? What can be more honorable than to have the same will as God himself, and (so far) as his children, to be like our Father? What can be more orderly and harmonious than for the will of the creature to move according to the Creator's will, and to be duly subservient to it, and accurately compliant with it? What can be more holy, nay, what else is holiness, but a will and life devoted and conformed to the will of God? What can be more safe, or what else can be safe at all, but to will the same things which the most perfect wisdom doth direct to, and infinite love itself doth choose? And what can be more easy and quieting to the soul, than to rest in that will which is always good, which never was misguided, and never chose amiss, and never was frustrated, or missed of its decreed ends? If we have no will but what is (objectively) the same with God's, that is, if we wholly comply with, and follow his will as our guide, and rest in his will as our ultimate end, our wills will never be disordered, sinful, misled, or frustrated. God hath all that he willeth, (absolutely,) and is never disappointed; and so should we, if we could will nothing but what he willeth. And would you not take him unquestionably for a happy man, who hath whatsoever he would have? Yea, and would have nothing but what is more just and good? There is no way to this happiness but making the will of God our will. God will not mutably change his will to bring it to ours: should holiness itself be conformed to sinners, and perfection to imperfection? But we must, by grace, bring over our wills to God's, and then they are in joint; and then only will they find content and rest. O, what would I beg more earnestly in the world, than a will conformed wholly to God's will, and cast into that mould, and desiring nothing but what God willeth!

But contrarily, what can be more foolish than for such infants and ignorant souls as we to will that which infinite wisdom is against? What more dishonorable than to be even at the very heart so contrary or unlike to God? What can be more irregular and unjust than for a created worm to set his will against his Maker's? What else is sin but a will and life that is cross to the regulating will of God? What can be more perilous and pernicious than to forsake a perfect, unerring guide, and to follow such igno-

fant judgments as our own in matters of eternal consequence? What can that soul expect, but a restless state in an uncomfortable wilderness, yea, perpetual self-vexation and despair, who forsakes God's will to follow his own, and hath a will that doth go cross to God's? Poor, self-tormenting sinners! consider that your own wills are your idols, which you set up against the will of God, and your own wills are the tyrants to which you are in bondage; your own wills are your prison, and the executioners that torment you with fear, and grief, and disappointments. What is it that you are afraid of, but lest you miss of your own wills? For sure you fear not lest God's will should be overcome and frustrated; what are your cares about but this? What are your sighs, and groans, and tears for? And what is it else that you complain of, but that your own wills are not fulfilled? It is not that God hath not his will. What is it that you are so impatient of, but the crossing of your own wills? This person crosseth them, and that accident crosseth them, and God crosseth them, and you cross them yourselves; and crossed they will be while they are cross to the will of God; for all this while they are as a bone out of joint; there is no ease till it be set right. In a word, a will that is contrary to God's will, and striveth and struggleth against it, is the offspring of the devil, the sum of all sin, and a foretaste of hell, even a restless self-tormentor; and to will nothing but what God willeth, and to love his will, and study to please him, and rest therein, is the rectitude and only rest of souls; and he that cannot rest contentedly in the will of God must be forever restless.

And when such a holy will and contentment appeareth in you, mankind will reverence it, and see that your natures are divine; and as they dare not reproach the will of God, so they will fear to speak evil of yours: when they see that you choose but what God first chooseth for you, and your wills do but follow the will of God, men will be afraid of provoking God against them as blasphemers, if they should scorn, deride or vilify you. And could we convince all men that our course is but the same which God commandeth, it would do much to stop their reproach and persecution. And if they see that we can joyfully suffer reproach, or poverty, or pains, or death, and joyfully pass away to God when he shall call us, and live and die in a contented complacency in the will of God, they will see that you have a beginning of heaven on earth, which no tyrant, no loss, or cross, or suffering, can deprive you of, while you can joyfully say, "The will of the Lord be done;" Acts xxi. 14.

Object. But if it be God's will for sin to punish me, or forsake me, should I contentedly rest in that revenging will?

Ans. 1. That sin of ours which maketh us incapable objects

of the complacent will of God is evil, and to be hated. But that will of God which is terminated on such an object, according to the nature of it, by just hatred, is good, and should be loved. And punishment is hurtful to us; but God's will and justice is good and amiable. 2. If you will close with God's will, you need not fear his will. If your will be unfeignedly to obey his commanding will, and to be and do what he would have you, his will is not to condemn or punish you. But if God's will prescribe you a holy life, and your will rebel, and be against it, no wonder if God's will be to punish you when your wills would not be punished; John i. 13. Heb. x. 10. John vii. 17. Luke xii. 47.

XX. It glorifieth God and religion in the world when Christians are faithful in all their relations, and diligently endeavor the sanctifying and happiness of all the societies which they are members of.

1. Holy families, well ordered, do much glorify God, and keep up religion in the world.

1. When husbands live with their wives in wisdom, holiness, and love, and wives are pious, obedient, meek, and peaceable, (Eph. v. 22. 25. Col. iii. 18, 19.) yea, unto such husbands as "obey not the word, that without the word may be won by the conversation of the wives;" 1 Pet. iii. 1, 2.

2. When parents make it their great and constant care and labor, with all holy skill, and love, and diligence, to educate their children in the fear of God, and the love of goodness, and the practice of a holy life, and to save them from sin, and the temptations of the world, the flesh, and the devil; and have more tender care of their souls than of their bodies, that so the church may have a succession of saints; and when children love, honor and obey their parents, and comfort them by their forwardness to all that is good, and their avoiding the ways and company of the ungodly; Eph. vi. 1. Psalm i. 1, 2.

3. When masters rule their servants as the servants of God, and servants willingly obey their masters, and serve them with cheerful diligence and trust, and are as careful and faithful about all their good and business as if it were not their own; Eph. vi. 5. 9. Col. iii. 21. and iv. 1. 1 Pet. ii. 18.

When the houses of Christians are societies of saints, and churches of God, and live in love and concord together, and all are laborious and faithful in their callings, abhorring idleness, gluttony, drunkenness, pride, contention, and evil speaking, and dealing justly with all their neighbors, and denying their own right for love and peace; this is the way to glorify religion in the world.

II. Well-ordered churches are the second sort of societies which must glorify God and propagate religion in the world.

1. When the pastors are learned in the Holy Scriptures, and skillful in their sacred work, and far excel all the people in the light of faith and knowledge, and in love to goodness, and to men's souls, and in lively, zealous diligence for God, and for men's salvation, thinking no labor, cost, or suffering, too dear a price for the people's good; when no sufferings or reproaches move them, nor account they their lives dear to them, that they may but finish their course and ministry with joy. When their public preaching hath convincing light and clearness, and powerful, affectionate application; and their private oversight is performed with impartiality, humility, and unwearied diligence, and they are able to resolve the people's cases of conscience solidly, and to exhort them earnestly, with powerful reason, and melting love; this honoureth religion, and winneth souls.

When they envy not one another, nor strive who shall be greatest or uppermost; but contrariwise, who shall be most serviceable to his brethren, and to the people's souls. When they oversee and feed the flock of God which is among them, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being ensamples to the flock; and seeking not theirs, but theirs; are willing to spend and be spent for their sakes; yea, though the more they love them the less they are beloved; not minding high things, but condescending to men of low estate; this is the way for ministers to glorify God; 1 Pet. v. 1—4. Acts xx. 2 Tim. i. 14, 15. 1 Tim. iv. 10. Heb. iv. 11—13. Acts xx. 24. 1 Thess. ii. 8. 2 Tim. iv. 1—3. Luke xxii. 24—26. 2 Cor. xii. 14, 15. Rom. xii. 16.

When ministers are above all worldly interest, and so teach and live that the people may see that they seek not the honor which is of men, but only that which is of God, and lay not up a treasure on earth, but in heaven; and trade all for another world, and are farther from pride than the lowest of the flock; when they have not only the clothing of sheep, but their harmless, profitable nature, and not the ravenousness or bloody jaws of destroying wolves. When they use not carnal weapons in their warfare, but by an eminency of light, and love, and life, endeavor to work the same in others; when they are of more public spirit than the people, and more self-denying, and above all private interests, and envyings and revenges, and are more patient in suffering than the people, through the power of stronger faith, and hope, and love. When they are wholly addicted to holiness and peace, and are zealous for the love and unity of believers, and become all things to all men, to win some; in meekness instructing opposers, abhorring contention, doing nothing in strife or vain glory, but preferring others before themselves; not preaching Christ in pride or envy, nor seeking their own praise, but thirsting after men's conversion,

edification, and salvation. Thus must Christ be honored by his ministers in the world.

When they speak the same things, being of one mind and judgment, uniting in the common faith, and contending for that against infidels and heretics, and, so far as they have attained, walk by the same rule, and mind the same things; and where they are differently minded or opinioned, wait in meekness and love till God reveal to them the reconciling truth. When they study more to narrow controversies than to widen them, and are skillful in detecting those ambiguous words, and verbal and notional differences, which to the unskillful seem material. When they are as surgeons, and not as soldiers; as skillful to heal differences as the proud and ignorant are ready to make them, and can plainly show the dark contenders wherein they agree, and do not know it. When they live in that sweet and amicable concord, which may tell the world that they love one another, and are of one faith and heart, being one in Christ. This is the way for ministers to glorify God in the world. And with thankfulness to God I acknowledge that such, for many years, I had my conversation with, of whom the world that now despiseth them is not worthy; Phil. ii. 21. Matt. vi. 19—21. John v. 44. 2 Cor. x. 4. 2 Tim. ii. 25, 26. 1 Cor. ix. 19, 20. 22. and x. 33. Phil. ii. 1—3. 1 Tim. vi. 3, 4. Jam. iii. 14—16. 2 Tim. ii. 14. 21. Phil. iii. 15—17. John xvii. 21. Eph. iv. 3—5. 1 Cor. i. 10. James iii. 17, 18.

And the maintaining of sound doctrine, spiritual, reasonable, and reverent worship, without ludicrous and unreverent trifling, or rudeness, or ignorance, or superstition, or needless singularity, much honoreth God, (as is aforesaid.) And so doth the exercise of holy discipline in the churches. Such discipline whereby the precious may be separated from the vile, and the holy from the profane, by authority and order; and not by popular usurpation, disorder, or unjust presumptions. Where the cause is fairly tried and judged, before men are cast out, or denied the privileges of the church. Where charity appears in embracing the weakest, and turning away none that turn not away from Christ, and condemning none without just proof; and justice and holiness appeareth in purging out the dangerous leaven, and in trying and rejecting the obstinately impenitent heretic and gross sinner after the first and second admonition, and disowning them that will not hear the church; Matt. xviii. 15, 16. Tit. iii. 10. 1 Cor. v. 11. When the neglect of discipline doth leave the church as polluted a society as the infidel world; and Christians that are owned in the public communion are as vicious, sensual, and ungodly, as heathens and Mahometans, it is one of the greatest injuries to Christ and our religion in the world. For it is by the purifying of a

peculiar people, zealous of good works, that Christ is known to be really the Savior of the world; and by making his followers better than others, that he and his doctrine and religion are known to be the best. Travellers tell me that nothing so much hindereth the conversion of the Mahometans as their daily experience that the lives of the Greek Christians, and others that live among them, are too ordinarily worse than theirs. More drunkenness, and more falsehood, lying, deceit, it is said, are among those Christians than among the Turks. If that be true, those are no true Christians; but woe be to them by whom such offense cometh. I have oft heard those soldiers justly censured as profane who turn churches into stables, (without great necessity.) But how much more hurtfully profane are they who, for carnal ends, confound the world and the church, and keep the multitude of the most sensual, ungodly persons in their communion, without ever calling them personally to repentance! and use the church keys but to revenge themselves on those that differ from them in some opinions, or that cross their interest and wills, or that seem too smart and zealous in the dislike of their carnality, sloth; and church pollutions! When the churches are as full of scandalous sinners as the assemblies of infidels and heathens, the world will hardly ever believe that infidelity and heathenism is not as good as the Christian faith. It is more by persons than by precepts that the world will judge of Christ and Christianity. And what men on earth do more scandalize the world, more expose Christianity to reproach, more harden infidels, more injure Christ, and serve the devil, than they that fill the church with impious, carnal pastors, (as in the church of Rome,) and then with impious, carnal people, maintained constantly in her communion, without any open disowning by a distinguishing, reforming discipline? When such pastors are no better than the soberer sort of heathens, save only in their opinion and formal words, and when their ordinary communicants are no better, it is no thanks to them if all turn not infidels that know them, and if Christianity be contemned, and decay out of the world; and it is along of such that disorderly separations attempt that discipline, and distinguishing of the godly and notoriously wicked, which such ungodly pastors will not attempt. See Lev. xix. 17. Matt. xviii. 15, 16. 1 Cor. v. Tit. iii. 10. Jer. xv. 19. Psalm xv. 2 Thess. iii. Rom. xvi. 17. 2 Tim. iii. 4, 5.

III. But O how great an honor is it to God and to religion, when kings, princes, and states do zealously devote their power to God, from whom they do receive it, and labor to make their kingdoms holy! When truth, sobriety, and piety have the countenance of human powers, and rulers wholly set themselves to

further the faithful preaching and practicing of the holy faith, and to unite and strengthen the ministers and churches, and to suppress iniquity, and to be a terror to evil doers, it taketh Satan's great advantage out of his hand, and worketh on carnal men by such means as they can feel and understand. Not that God needs the help of man, but that he hath settled officers and a natural order, by which he usually worketh in the world: and as it cannot be expected that an unholy parent and master should have a holy family, or an unholy pastor a holy church, unless by extraordinary mercy; no more can we expect that ungodly magistrates should have a godly kingdom or commonwealth, of which the sacred history of the Jewish and Israelitish kings doth give you a full confirmation. But this I must now say no more of. And thus I have told you, in twenty particulars, what are those good works in which the light of Christians must shine before men to the glorifying of God.

Object. Doth not Matt. v. 10—12. contradict all this? “Blessed are ye when men revile you and persecute you, and say all manner of evil against you falsely for my sake.”

Ans. No. You must here distinguish, first, of men; secondly, of righteousness and good works.

I. The men that we have to do with are, first, ordinary, natural men, corrupted by original sin, but yet not hardened to serpentine malignity, as some are; secondly, or they are men that, by sinning against nature and common light, are forsaken and given up to malignant minds.

II. The good works which natural light and human interest can discern and commend, do differ from those which are merely evangelical, of supernatural revelation.

1. Malignant persons, hardened in enmity, will scorn and persecute holiness itself, and even that good which reason justifies, and therefore are called unreasonable, wicked men; 2 Thess. iii.

2. Good works with these men make us odious, unless they are such as gratify their lusts.

3. But there are natural men not yet so hardened and forsaken, who are usually them that the gospel doth convert; and these have not yet so blinded nature, nor lost all sense of good and evil, but that they honor him that doth good in all the twenty particulars which I have named, and think ill of those that do the contrary, though yet they relish not the Christian righteousness, and things of supernatural revelation, for want of faith.

Let us briefly now apply it.

Use 1. This informs us what an honorable state Christianity and true godliness is. When God hath made us to be the lights of the world, to shine before men to the glory of his holiness, as the sun and stars do to the glory of his power, no wonder if in

glory we shall shine as stars in the firmament of our Father, if we do so here; Dan. xii. 3. Matt. xiii. 43. Phil. ii. 15. This must not make us proud, but thankful; for our pride is our shame, and our humility is our glory.

Use 2. And what wonder if all the powers of darkness do bend their endeavors to obscure this sacred light! The Prince of Darkness is the enemy of the Father of Lights; and this is the great war between Christ and Satan in the world. Christ is the light of the world, and setteth up ministerial lights for the world and for his house. His work is to send them forth, to teach them, and defend them, to send his Spirit to work in and by them, to bring men to the everlasting light. And Satan's work is to stir up all that he can against them, high and low, learned and unlearned, and to put Christ's lights, both ministers and people, under a bushel; and to make the world believe that they are enemies, and come to hurt them, that they may be hated as the scorn and offscouring of the world, and to keep up ignorance in ministers themselves, that, the church's eyes being dark, the darkness may be great.

But let us pray that God would "forgive our enemies, persecutors, and slanderers, and turn their hearts;" and that he would "open our lips, that our mouths may show forth his praise;" and though his ministers and people have their faulty weaknesses, that he would "be merciful to our infirmities, and grant that those things which the craft and subtlety of the devil or man worketh against us may be brought to nought, and by the providence of his goodness may be dispersed; that we, his servants, being hindered by no persecution, may give thanks to him in his holy church, and serve him in holiness and pureness of life, to his glory," through Jesus Christ.

Use 3. You may see hence how much those men are mistaken, who talk of the good works or lives of Christians, as that which must have no honor, lest it dishonor God; as if all the honor were taken from Christ which is given to good works, and the patient's health were the dishonor of the physician, when we are redeemed and purified to be zealous of good works, and created for them in Christ Jesus, as Titus ii. 14. Eph. ii. 10. Yea, and shall be judged according to our works.

Use 4. This informeth you that the good works or lives of Christians is a great means ordained by Christ for the convincing of sinners, and the glorifying of God in the world. Preaching doth much, but it is not appointed to do all. The lives of preachers must also be a convincing light; and all true Christians, men and women, are called to preach to the world by their good works; and a holy, righteous and sober life is the great ordinance of God, appointed for the saving of yourselves and others. O that the

Lord would bring this close to all our hearts! Christians, if you abhor dumb teachers, because they starve and betray souls, take heed lest you condemn yourselves: you owe men the convincing helps of a holy, fruitful life, as well as the preacher owes them his ministry. Preach by well doing, shine out in good works, or else you are no lights of Christ, but betrayers of men's souls: you rob all about you of a great ordinance of God, a great means appointed by him for men's salvation. The world will judge of the Scriptures by your lives, and of religion by your lives, and of Christ himself by your lives. If your lives are such as tend to persuade men that Christians are but like other men, yea, that they are but self-conceited sinners, as carnal, sensual, uncharitable, proud, self-seeking, worldly, envious, as others, and so that Christianity is but such, this is a horrid blaspheming of Christ, how highly soever your tongues may speak of him, and how low soever your knees may bow to him. O that you knew how much of God's great work of salvation in the world is to be done by Christians' lives. Your lives must teach men to believe that there is a heaven to be won, and a hell to be escaped: your lives must help men to believe that Christ and his word are true: your lives must tell men what holiness is, and convince them of the need of regeneration; and that the Spirit of sanctification is no fancy, but the witness of Jesus Christ in the world: your lives must tell men, by repentance and obedience, that sin is the greatest evil; and must show them the difference between the righteous and the wicked: yea, the holiness of God must be glorified by your lives. Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, the Scripture, the church, and heaven itself, must be known much by our lives. And may not I say, then, with the apostle, (2 Peter iii. 11.) "What manner of persons, then, ought we to be, in all holy conversation and godliness, when the grace of God, which bringeth salvation, hath appeared to all men, teaching us to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, and to live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world?" Tit. ii. 11, 12.

Use 5. But alas! what suitable and plentiful matter doth this offer us for our humiliation and lamentation on such a day as this! A flood of tears is not too much to lament the scandals of the Christian world. With what wounded hearts should we think of the state of the churches in Armenia, Syria, Egypt, Abascia, and all the oppressed Greeks, and all the poor deceived and oppressed Papists, and all the ignorant, carnal Protestants! O, how unlike are your lives to your Christian faith, and to the pattern left them by their Lord! Doth a worldly, proud, and fleshly, and contentious clergy glorify God? Doth an ignorant ministry glorify him, who understand not the message which they should deliver? Will the world turn Christians by seeing Christians seek the blood

and ruin of each other? and hearing even preachers reproach each other? or seeing them silence or persecute each other? or by seeing the people run into many sects, and separate from one another, as unworthy of Christian communion? Will proud, ignorant, censorious, fleshly, worldly professors of religion ever draw the world to love religion? Or will peevish, self-willed, impatient, discontented souls, that are still wrangling, crying, and repining, make men believe that their religion rejoiceth, blesseth, and sanctifieth the soul, and maketh men far happier than all others in the world? Alas! what wonder that so small a part of the world are Christians, and so few converted to the love of holiness, when the great means is denied them by you which God hath appointed for their conversion, and the world hath not one helper for a hundred or thousand that it should have! You cry out at those that put out the church-lights, under pretense of snuffing them, while yourselves are darkness, or as a stinking snuff.

O, brethren and Christians all, I beseech you, let us now, and often, closely ask ourselves, What do we more than an Antonine, a Seneca, or a Cicero, or a Socrates did, beyond opinions, words, and formalities? What do you which is like to convert the world, to convince an infidel, or glorify God? Nay, do not some among us think that it is the height, or part of their religion, to live so contrary to the world, as to be singular from others, even in lawful or indifferent things, and to do little or nothing which the world thinks well of? As if crossing and displeasing men needlessly were their winning conversation. O, when once we go as far beyond them in love, humility, meekness, patience, fruitfulness, mortification, self-denial, and heavenliness, as we do in opinions, profession, and self-esteem, then we shall win souls, and glorify God, and he will also glorify us.

Use 6. And here we see the wonderful mercy of God to the world, who hath appointed them so much means for their conviction and salvation. So many Christians as there be in the world, so many practical preachers and helps to men's conversion are there appointed by God; and let the blame and shame lie on us, where it is due, and not on God, if yet the world remain in darkness. It is God's will that every Christian in the world should be as a star, to shine to sinners in their darkness; and O, then, how gloriously would the world be bespangled and enlightened! If you say, 'Why, then, doth not God make Christians better?' That is a question which cannot be well answered, without a larger opening of the methods of grace than we can now have leisure for, and therefore must be done in its proper season.

Use 7. Those that honor God he will honor; and therefore let us also give them that honor which is their due. The barren professors, who honor themselves by overvaluing their poor

knowledge, gifts, and grace, and affecting too great a distance from their brethren, and censuring others as unworthy of their communion without reproof, are not the men that honor God, and can lay claim to no great honor from men. But God hath among us a prudent, holy, humble, laborious, patient ministry, that glorify him by their works and patience, and he hath among us a meek and humble, a blameless, and a loving and fruitful sort of Christians, who imitate the purity, charity, and simplicity, yea, and concord of the primitive church. These tell the world, to their sight and experience, that religion is better than ignorance and carnality. These tell the world, that Christ and his holy word are true, while he doth that, in renewing and sanctifying souls, which none else in the world can do. These show the world, that faith, and holiness, and self-denial, and the hopes of immortality, are no deceits. These glorify God, and are the great benefactors of the world. I must solemnly profess, that did I not know such a people in the world, who, notwithstanding their infirmities, do manifest a holy and heavenly disposition in their lives, I should want myself so great a help to my faith in Christ, and the promise of life eternal, that I fear, without it, my faith would fail. And had I never known a holier ministry and people than those that live but a common life, and excel heathens in nothing but their belief or opinions, and church orders and formalities, I should find my faith assaulted with so great temptations as I doubt I should not well withstand. No talk will persuade men that he is the best physician that healeth no more nor worse diseases than others do. Nor would Christ be taken for the Savior of the world if he did not save men. And he saveth them not if he make them not holier and better than other men.

O, then, how much do we owe to Christ for sending his Spirit into his saints, and for exemplifying his holy word on holy souls, and for giving us as many visible proofs of his holiness, power, and truth, as there are holy Christians in the world! We must not flatter them, nor excuse their faults, nor puff them up. But because the righteous is more excellent than his neighbor, we must accordingly love and honor them, and Christ in them. For Christ telleth us, that he is glorified in them here, (John xvii. 10.) and that what is done to them, his brethren, even the least, is taken as done to him, (Matt. xxv.) and he will be glorified and admired in them when he cometh in his glory at the last, (2 Thess. i. 8, 10.) and he will glorify their very works before all the world, with a "Well done, good and faithful servant; enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."

THE
FAREWELL SERMON

OF

RICHARD BAXTER;

PREPARED TO HAVE BEEN PREACHED TO HIS HEARERS

AT KIDDERMINSTER,

AT HIS DEPARTURE, BUT FORBIDDEN.

TO THE
INHABITANTS
OF THE
BOROUGH AND FOREIGN OF KIDDERMINSTER,
IN
THE COUNTY OF WORCESTER.

DEAR FRIENDS,

WHILE I was lately turning up the rubbish of my old papers, I found this sermon in the bottom, which I had quite forgotten that I kept, but thought it had been cast away with many hundred others. Much of the last sheet was added to the sermon after I came from you ; and I remember that when I intended to send you this sermon as my farewell, I durst not then have so much converse with you, for your own sakes, lest it should raise more enmity against you, and your displeasing circumstances of religious practice should be said to come from my continued counsels to you.

I have lately taken my farewell of the world, in a book which I called ' My Dying Thoughts ; ' my pain of body and debility increasing, and my flesh being grown to me more grievous than all my enemies or outward troubles. I remembered the benefit I often received upon your prayers ; and craving the continuance of them, till you hear of my dissolution, therewith I send this, as my special farewell to yourselves, whom I am bound to remember with more than ordinary love and thankfulness, while I am

RICHARD BAXTER.

BAXTER'S FAREWELL SERMON.

JOHN xvi. 22.

AND YE NOW, THEREFORE, HAVE SORROW; BUT I WILL SEE YOU AGAIN, AND YOUR HEART SHALL REJOICE, AND YOUR JOY NO MAN TAKETH FROM YOU.

MY DEARLY BELOVED IN OUR DEAREST LORD,

I WILL so far consent to your troubled thoughts of this unwelcome day, as to confess that to me, as well as you, it somewhat resembleth the day of death. 1. Death is the separation of the dearest consorts, soul and body; and how near the union is betwixt us, both that of relation and that of affection, which must admit this day of some kind of dissolution, I will rather tell to strangers than to you. 2. Death is unwelcome both to soul and body, of itself; (though it destroy not the soul, it doth the body.) So dear companions part not willingly. Your hearts and minds are here so over-forward in the application, that words may be well spared, where sense hath taken so deep possession. 3. Death is the end of human converse here on earth. We must see and talk with our friends here no more. And this our separation is like to end that converse between you and me, which formerly we have had in the duties of our relations. We must no more go up together, as formerly, to the house of God; I must no more speak to you publicly in his name, nor solace my own soul, in opening to you the gospel of salvation, nor in the mention of his covenant, his grace, or kingdom. Those souls that have not been convinced and converted, are never like to hear more from me for their conviction or conversion. I have finished all the instruction, reproof, exhortation, and persuasion, which ever I must use, in order to their salvation. I must speak here no more to inform the ignorant, to reform the wicked, to reduce the erroneous, to search the hypocrite, to humble the proud, to bow the obstinate, or to bring the worldly, the impenitent, and ungodly to the knowledge of the word, themselves, and God. I must speak no more to strengthen the weak, to comfort the afflicted, nor to build you up in faith and holiness. Our day is past; our night is come, when we cannot work as formerly we have done. My opportunities here are at an end. 4. Death is the

end of earthly comforts, and our separation is like to be the end of that comfortable communion, which God for many years hath granted us. Our public and private communion hath been sweet to us. The Lord hath been our pastor, and hath not suffered us to want. He made us lie down in his pleasant pastures, and hath led us by the silent streams; Psalm xxiii. 1, 2. He restored our souls, and his very rod and staff did comfort us; but his sniting and scattering time is come. These pleasures now are at an end.

5. Death is the end of human labors; there is no ploughing or sowing, no building or planting in the grave. And so doth our separation end the works of our mutual relation in this place.

6. Death is the effect of painful sickness, and usually of the folly, intemperance, or oversight of ourselves. And, though our conscience reproach us not with gross unfaithfulness, yet are our failings so many, and so great, as force us to justify the severity of our Father, and to confess that we deserve this rod. Though we have been censured by the world as being over-strict, and doing too much for the saving of our own and others' souls, yet it is another kind of charge that conscience hath against us. How earnestly do we now wish that we had done much more; that I had preached more fervently, and you had heard more diligently, and we had all obeyed God more strictly, and done more for the souls of the ignorant, careless, hardened sinners that were among us! It is just with God that so dull a preacher should be put to silence, that could ever speak without tears and fervent importunity to impenitent sinners, when he knew that it was for no less than the saving of their souls, and foresaw the joys which they would lose, and the torment which they must endure, if they repented not. With what shame and sorrow do I now look back upon the cold and lifeless sermons which I preached; and upon those years' neglect of the duty of private instructing of your families, before we set upon it orderly and constantly. Our destruction is of ourselves! Our undervaluings and neglects have forfeited our opportunities. As good Melancthon was wont to say, '*In vulneribus nostris proprias agnoscimus pennas.*' The arrow that woundeth us was feathered from our own wings.

7. Death useth to put surviving friends into a dark and mourning habit. Their lamentations are the chief part of funeral solemnities. And in this also we have our part. The compassion of condolers is greater than we desire; for sorrow is apt to grow unruly, and exceed its bounds, and bring on more sufferings by lamenting one, and also to lock too much at the instruments, and to be more offended at them than at our sins.

8. But, death is the end of all the living. The mourners also must come after us, and, alas! how soon! It maketh our fall more grievous to us to foresee how many must ere long come

down! How many hundred pastors must shortly be separated from their flocks! If there were no epidemical malady to destroy us, our ministry hath its mortality. Your fathers, where are they? and the prophets, do they live forever? Zech. i. 5. This made us the more importunate with you in our ministry, because we knew that we must preach to you, and pray with you, and instruct you, and watch over you but a little while. Though we knew not what instrument death would use, we knew our final day was coming, when we must preach, and exhort, and pray our last with you. We knew that it behoved us to work while it was day (and, O, that we had done it better!) because the night was coming, when none could work; John ix. 4. 9. And as it is appointed to all men once to die, so after death there followeth judgment. And we also have our further judgment to undergo. We must expect our hour of temptation. We must be judged by men, as well as chastened by God. We must prepare to bear the reproach and slanders of malicious tongues, and the unrighteous censures of those that know us not, and of those who think it their interest to condemn us. And we must also call ourselves to judgment. We are like to have unwelcome leisure, to review the days and duties which are past. It will then be time for us to call ourselves to account of our preaching and studies, and other ministerial works, and to sentence our labors and our lives; and it will be time for you to call yourselves to account of your hearing and profiting, and to ask, 'How have we used the mercies which are taken from us?' Yea, God himself will judge us according to our works. He will not justify us, if we have been unfaithful in our little, and have been such as Satan and his instruments, the accusers of the brethren, do report us. But if we have been faithful, we may expect his double justification. 1. By pardon he will justify us from our sins. 2. By plea and righteous sentence, he will justify us against the false accusations of our enemies; and that is enough. How small a thing should it seem to us to be judged of man, who must stand or fall to the final sentence of the Almighty God! 10. The separated soul and body do retain their relations, and the soul its inclination to a reunion with its body. And though our nearest obligations may be now dissolved, and the exercise of our communion hindered, yet I know we shall never forget each other, nor shall the bond of love which doth unite us be ever loosed and made void. And so much of our relation shall still continue, as intimated in those texts, 1 Cor. iv. 15, 16. xii. 14. Phil. iv. 1, &c. 11. And the power of death will not be everlasting; a resurrection and reunion there will be at last, but whether in this world, I cannot prophesy. I am apter to think that most of us must die in the wilderness, and that our night must bear some proportion with our

day. But things unrevealed belong only unto God. It sufficeth me to be sure of this, that as our kingdom, so our comforts are not of this world, and that as Christ, so his servants under him, may say, "Behold I and the children which God hath given me, (Heb. ii. 13.) and that we shall present you as chaste virgins unto Christ;" 2 Cor. xi. 2. "And therefore we have preached, taught, and warned, that we might present you perfect in Christ Jesus;" Col. i. 28. "For what is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Are not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at his coming? For ye are our glory and our joy;" 1 Thess. ii. 19, 20.

But yet the resemblance between death and this our separation holdeth not in all things. 1. It is not I, nor any pastor, that is the church's soul or life. This is the honor of Christ, the Head. Being planted into him, you may live, though all his ministers were dead, or all your teachers driven into corners; Isa. xxx. 20. 2. The continuance of your church state dependeth not on the continuance of any one single pastor whatsoever. God can provide you others to succeed us, that may do his work for you more successfully than we. And could I but hope that they should be as able, and holy, and diligent as I desire, how little should I partake with you in this day's sorrows! Had I not given you these exceptions, malicious tongues would have reported that I made myself your life or soul, and take the churches to be all dead, when such as I are silenced and cast out. But I remember Psalm xii.

Though what I have said, and what you feel, may make you think that a funeral sermon is most seasonable on such a day, yet I have rather chosen to preach to you the doctrine of rejoicing, because you sorrow not as men that have no hope, and because I must consider what tendeth most to your strength and steadfastness; and that you may see herein I imitate our Lord, I have chosen his words to his troubled disciples, before his departure from them; John xvi. 22. And though I make no question but it will be said with scorn, that thus I make myself as Christ, and that I seditiously encourage you by the expectations of my restitution, yet will I not therefore forbear to use my Savior's consolatory words, but will remember to whom, and on what occasion, he said, "Every plant which my heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up. Let them alone; they be blind leaders of the blind; and if the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch;" Matt. xv. 13, 14.

The words are Christ's comforts to his orphans, sorrowful disciples, expressing, first, their present condition, and that which they were now to taste of, and, secondly, their future state. Their present case is a state of sorrow, because that Christ must be taken

from them. Their future case will be a state of joy, which is expressed, 1. In the futurity of the cause, "but I will see you again." 2. In the promise of the effect, "and your heart shall rejoice." 3. In the duration and invincibility of it, "and your joy no man taketh from you," or "shall take from you." He had before likened their sorrows on this occasion to the pains of a woman in her child-bearing, which is but short, and endeth in joy. And in relation to that similitude, the Syriac translateth *λειτουργία*, 'sickness,' and the Persian translateth it 'calamity.' Some expositors limit the cause of their sorrows to the absence of Christ, or that death of his which will for a time both shake their faith, and astonish their hopes, and deprive them of their former comforts. And others limit the word 'therefore' to the following crosses or sufferings which they must undergo for the sake of Christ; and accordingly they interpret the cause of their succeeding joy. But I see no reason but both are included in the text, but principally the first, and the other consequently. As if he had said, 'When you see me crucified, your hearts and hopes will begin to fail, and sorrow to overwhelm your minds, and you will be exposed to the fury of the unbelieving world; but it will be but for a moment; for when you see that I am risen again, your joy will be revived, and my Spirit afterwards, and continual encouragements shall greatly increase and perpetuate your joys, which no persecutions or sufferings shall deprive you of, but they shall at last be perfected in the heavenly, everlasting joys.' The cause of their sorrow is, first, his absence, and, next, their sufferings with him in the world: when the bridegroom is taken from them, they must fast, that is, live an afflicted kind of life in various sorrows; and the causes of their succeeding joy are, first, his resurrection, and, next, his Spirit, which is their comforter, and, lastly, the presence of his glory at their reception into his glorious kingdom. Their sorrow was to be short, as that of a woman in travail, and it was to have a tendency to their joy. And their joy was to be sure and near; "I will see you again;" and great; "your heart shall rejoice;" and everlasting; "your joy no man taketh from you."

The sense of the text is contained in these six doctrinal propositions:—

Doct. 1. Sorrow goeth before joy with Christ's disciples.

Doct. 2. Christ's death and departure was the cause of his disciples' sorrows.

Doct. 3. The sorrows of Christ's disciples are but short. It is but 'now.'

Doct. 4. Christ will again visit his sorrowful disciples, though at the present he seem to be taken from them.

Doct. 5. When Christ returneth or appeareth to his disciples, their sorrows will be turned into joy.

Doct. 6. The joy of Christians in the return or re-appearing of their Lord is such as no man shall take from them.

Of these, by God's assistance, I shall speak in order, and therefore be but short on each.

Doct. 1. Sorrow goeth before joy with Christ's disciples.

The evening and the morning make their day. They must sow in tears before they reap in joy. They must have trouble in the world, and peace in Christ. God will first dwell in the contrite heart, to prepare it to dwell with him in glory. The pains of travail must go before the joy of the beloved birth.

Quest. What kind of sorrow is it that goeth before our joy?

Ans. 1. There is a sorrow positively sinful, which doth, but should not, go before our joy. Though this be not meant directly in the text, yet it is too constant a foregoer of our comforts. It is not the joys of innocency that are our portion, but the joys of restoration; and the pains of our disease go before the ease and comfort of our recovery. We have our worldly sorrows, and our passionate and peevish sorrows, like Jonah's for the withering of his gourd. According to the degree of our remaining corruption, we have our sorrows, which must be sorrowed for again. Sometimes we are troubled at the providences of God, and sometimes at the dealings of men; at the words or doings of enemies, of friends, of all about us. We are grieved if we have not what we would have; and when we have it, it becomes our greater grief: nothing well pleaseth us, till we so devote ourselves to please our God, as to be pleased in the pleasing of him.

2. And we have our sorrows, which are sinful through our weakness and imperfection, when, through the languishing feebleness of our souls, we are overmuch troubled at that which we may lawfully sorrow for with moderation; when impatience causeth us to make a greater matter of our afflictions than we ought. If God do but try us with wants or crosses; if we lose our friends, or if they prove unkind; we double the weight of the cross by our impatience. This cometh from the remnants of unmortified selfishness, carnality, and overloving earthly things. Were they less loved, they would be less sorrowed for. If we had seen their vanity, and mortification had made them nothing to us, we should then part with them as with vanity and nothing. It is seldom that God or men afflict us, but we therefore afflict ourselves much more. As the destruction of the wicked, so the troubles of the godly is chiefly of themselves.

3. There is a mere natural suffering or sorrow, which is neither morally good or bad. As to be weary with our labor; to be pained with our diseases; to be sensible of hunger and thirst, of cold

and heat; to be averse to death as death, as Christ himself was; and at last to undergo it, and lie down in the dust. There are many sorrows which are the fruits of sin, which yet, in themselves, are neither sin nor duty.

4. There are castigatory sorrows from the hand of God, which have a tendency to our cure, if we use them according to his appointment. Such are all the foresaid natural sufferings, considered as God's means and instruments of our benefit. He woundeth the body to heal the soul: he lanceth the sore, to let out the corruption: he letteth us bleed to cure our inflammations and apostemated parts. He chasteneth all that he loveth and receiveth; (Heb. xii. 1—14.) and we must be subject to a chastening Father, if we will live; for he doth it for our profit, "that we may be partakers of his holiness."

5. There are honorable and gainful sufferings, from blind, malicious, wicked men, for the cause of Christ and righteousness, such as the gospel frequently warneth believers to expect. These are the sorrows that have the promises of fullest joy, not that the mere suffering in itself is acceptable to God; but the love which is manifested by suffering for him, is that which he cannot but accept; so that the same measure of sufferings are more or less acceptable, as there is more or less love to God expressed by them, and as the honor of Christ is more or less intended in them. For to give the body to be burned without love, will profit us nothing. But when the cause is Christ's, and the heart intendeth him as the end of the suffering, (1 Cor. xiii. 3.) then "blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven," &c. Matt. v. 10—12.

6. There are penitential and medicinal sufferings, for the killing of sin, and helping on the work of grace, which are made our duty. In the former we are to be but submissive patients, but in these we must be obedient agents, and must inflict them on ourselves. Such are the sorrows of contrition and true repentance; the exercises of fasting, abstinence, and humiliation; the grief of the soul for God's displeasure, for the hiding of his face, and the abatement of his graces in us; and all the works of mortifying self-denial, and forbearing all forbidden pleasures which God doth call his servants to, though in the primitive and principal part of holiness there is nothing but what is sweet and pleasant to a soul, so far as it is holy; (as the love of God and the love of others, and worshiping God, and doing good, and joy, and thanks, and praise, and obedience, &c.) Yet the medicinal parts of grace, or holiness, have something necessarily in them that is bitter, even to nature as nature, and not only as corrupt, such as are contrition, self-denial, mortification, abstinence, as aforesaid.

7. There are charitable sorrows for the dishonor of God, and for the sin, hurt, and miseries of others. These, also, are our duties, and we must be agents in them as well as patients. As we must first pray for the hallowing of the name of God, and the coming of his kingdom, and the doing of his will on earth as it is done in heaven, so we must most grieve for the abuse and dishonor of God's name, the hindering of his kingdom, and the breaking of his laws; that so many nations see not the peril, and know not God, and have not the gospel, or will not receive it, but live in rebellion against their Maker, and in blindness, obstinacy, and hardness of heart, and are given up to commit uncleanness with greediness; (Eph. iv. 18, 19.) that so many nations which are called Christians are captivated in ignorance and superstition, by the blindness, pride, carnality, and covetousness of their usurping, self-obtruding guides; that so many men professing Christianity have so little of the knowledge or power of what they generally and ignorantly profess, and live to the shame of their profession, the great dishonor and displeasure of their Lord, and the grief or hardening of others; that the church of Christ is broken into so many sects and factions, possessed with such an uncharitable, destroying zeal against each other, and persecuting their brethren as cruelly as Turks and heathens do; that the best of Christians are so few, and yet so weak and liable to miscarriages. All these are the matter of that sorrow which God hath made our duty; and all these sorts of sorrow do go before a Christian's fullest joy.

Reason 1. God will have some conformity between the order of nature and of grace. Non-entity was before created entity; the evening before morning; infancy before maturity of age; weakness before strength; the buried seed before the plant, the flower, and fruit; and infants cry before they laugh; weakness is soon hurt, and very querulous. No wonder, then, if our sorrows go before our joys.

2. Sin goeth before grace, and therefore our sorrows are before our joys. The seed is first fruitful which was first sown. Joy, indeed, hath the elder parent, *in esse reali et absoluto*, but not *in esse causali et relativo*. We are the children of the first Adam, before we are children of the second; we are born flesh of flesh, before we are born spiritual of the Spirit; 1 Cor. xv. John iii. 6. And where Satan goeth before Christ, it is equal that sorrow be before joy.

3. Our gracious Father and wise Physician doth see that this is the fittest method for our cure. That we may deny ourselves, we must know how little we are beholden to ourselves, and must smart by the fruit of our sin and folly before we are eased by the fruit of love and grace. It is the property of the flesh to judge by sense,

and therefore sense shall help to mortify it. The frowns of the world shall be an antidote against its flatteries. It killeth by pleasing, and therefore it may help our cure by displeasing us. Loving it is men's undoing; and hurting us is the way to keep us from overloving it. These wholesome sorrows do greatly disable our most dangerous temptations, and preserve us from the pernicious poison of prosperity. They rouse us up when we are lazy and ready to sit down; they awake us when we are ready to fall asleep; they drive us to God when we are ready to forget him, and dote upon a deceiver; they teach us part of the meaning of the gospel; without them we know not well what "a Savior," a "promise," a "pardon," "grace," and many other gospel terms, do signify. They teach us to pray, and teach us to hear and read with understanding; they tell us the value of all our mercies, and teach us the use of all the means of grace. They are needful to fix our flashy, light, inconstant minds, which are apt to be gazing upon every bait, and to be touching or tasting the forbidden fruit; and to be taken with those things which we had lately cast behind our backs, till medicinal sorrow doth awake our reason, and make us see the folly of our dreams. Yea, if sorrow check us not, and make us wise, we are ready to lay by our grace and wit, and to follow any goblin in the dark, and, like men bewitched, to be deceived by we know not what, and to go on as a bird to the fowler's snare, as an ox to the slaughter, and as a fool to the correction of the stocks; Prov. vii. 22, 23.

4. Moreover; precedent sorrows will raise the price of following joys. They will make us more desirous of the day of our deliverance, and will make it the welcomer to us when it comes. Heaven will be seasonable after a life of so much trouble; and they that come out of great tribulation, will joyfully sing the praises of their Redeemer; Rev. vii. 14.

5. And God will have the members conformed to their Head: (Luke xiv. 28, 33.) this was Christ's method, and it must be ours; (Rom. viii. 17, 18.) we must take up the cross, and follow him, if ever we will have the crown; and we must suffer with him if we will be glorified with him; (2 Tim. ii. 12.) Though the will of God be the reason which alone should satisfy his creatures, yet these reasons show you the equity and goodness of his ways.

Use 1. If sorrow before joy be God's ordinary method of dealing with his most beloved servants, learn hence to understand the importance of your sorrows. You say as Baruch, "Woe is me now; for the Lord hath added grief to my sorrow. I fainted in my sighing, and I find no rest;" Jer. xlv. 3. You are ingenious in recounting and aggravating your afflictions. But are you as ingenious in expounding them aright? do you not judge of them rather

by your present sense, than by their use and tendency? You will not do so by the bitterness of a medicine, or the working of a purge or vomit. You will like it best when it worketh in that way as usually it doth with them that it cureth. And should you not be glad to find that God taketh that way with you, which he most usually takes with those that he saveth. Sure you do not set light by the love of God. Why then do you complain so much against the signs and products of it? Is it not because you have yet much unbelief, and judge of God's love as the flesh directeth you, instead of judging by the effects and prognostics which he himself hath bid you judge by? We will grant to the flesh, that no chastisement for the present seemeth joyous, but grievous; if you will believe the Spirit that, nevertheless, afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness to them that are exercised thereby; and that "whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth;" Heb. xii. 6, 11. Misunderstand not, then, the prognostics of your present sorrows. Think how they will work as well as how they taste. They bode good, though they are unpleasant. If you were bastards and reprobates, you might feel less of the rod. When the ploughers make furrows on you, it prepareth you for the seed; and the showers that water it prognosticate a plenteous harvest. Think it not strange if he thresh and grind you, if you would be bread for your Master's use. He is not drowning his sheep when he washeth them, nor killing them when he is shearing them. But by this he showeth that they are his own: and the new-shorn sheep do most visibly bear his name or mark, when it is almost worn out, and scarce discernible, on them that have the longest fleece. If you love the world and prosperity best, rejoice most in it, and grieve most for the want of it. But if you love God best, and take him for your part and treasure, rejoice in him, and in that condition which hath the fullest significations of his love, and grieve most for his displeasure, and for that condition which either signifieth it, or most enticeth you to displease him; 2 Cor. iv. 18. Matt. vi. 20, 21. If things present be your portion, then seek them first, and rejoice in them, and mourn when they are taken from you; Col. iii. 1—4. But if really your portion be above with Christ, let your hearts be there; and let your joys, and sorrows, and endeavors signify it. The sense of brutes doth judge of pain and pleasure only by their present feeling; but the reason of a man, and the faith of a Christian, do estimate them according to their signification and importance. I know that it is in vain to think by reason to reconcile the flesh and sense unto its sufferings; but if I may speak to you as to men, much more if as to Christians, and reason with your reasonable part, I shall not at all despair of the success.

Quest. 1. Tell me, then, who it is that you suffer by ; that hath the principal disposing hand in all ? Is it one that you can reasonably suspect of any want of power, wisdom, or goodness ? Is he not much fitter to dispose of you than you or any mortals are ? If the physician be better than the patient, to determine how he shall be ordered, and if you are fitter than your infant child, and if you are fitter than your beast, to determine of his pasture, work, and usage, sure, then, you will grant, that God is much more fit than we. And if he would give you your choice and say, 'It shall go with thee, all thy days, for prosperity or adversity, life or death, as thou wilt thyself, or as thy dearest friend will ;' you should say, 'Nay, Lord, but let it be as thou wilt ; for I and my friend are foolish and partial, and know not what is best for ourselves. Not our wills, but thy will be done.'

Quest. 2. Do you not see that carnal pleasure is far more dangerous than all your sorrows ? Look on the ungodly that prosper in the world, and tell me whether you would be in their condition. If not, why do you long for their temptations ; and to live in that air whose corruption causeth such epidemical mortalities ? If you would not, with the rich man, (Luke xvi.) be damnaed for sensuality, nor with the fool, (Luke xii. 19, 20.) say, Soul, take thy ease, &c. when your souls are presently to be taken from you ; or with him, (Luke xviii. 22, 23.) go away sorrowful from Christ ; desire not the temptations which brought them to it. If you would not oppress the people of God with Pharaoh, nor persecute the prophets with Ahab and Jezebel, nor resist the gospel, and persecute the preachers of it, with the Scribes and Pharisees ; (2 Thess. xiv. 15, 16.) desire not the temptations which led them to all this.

Quest. 3. Would not you follow your Savior, and rather be conformed to him and to his saints, than to the wicked that have their portion in this life ? I doubt you do not well study the life and sufferings of Christ, and the reason of them, when you find yourselves so little concerned in them, and so desirous of another way. And would you not go to heaven in the common way that the saints of old have gone before you in ? Read the Scripture and all church history, and observe which is the beaten path of life ; and whether even among believers, and the pastors of the church, it was the persecuted or the prosperous that most honored their profession, and which of them it was that corrupted the church with pride and domination, and kindled in it those flames of contention which are consuming it to this day ; and sowed those seeds of divisions whose sour fruit have set their children's teeth on edge. Mark whether it was the suffering or the prospering part that hath had the greatest hand in her after-sufferings.

Quest. 4. What saith your own experience, and how hath God

dealt with you in the time that is past? Hath not your suffering done you good? If it have not, you may thank yourselves; for I am sure God's rod hath a healing virtue, and others have received a cure by it. How much is mankind beholden to the cross! When David went weeping up mount Olivet, he was in a safer case than when he was gazing on Bathsheba from his battlements. And when Christ was sweating blood upon mount Olivet, (Luke xxii. 44.) it was a sign that man's redemption was in hand; and when he was bleeding on the cross, and drinking vinegar and gall, it was almost finished. And if the cross hath borne such happy fruit, what reason have we to be so much against it? If it have proved good for you that you were afflicted, and no part of your lives have been more fruitful, why should your desires so much contradict your own experience? If bitter things have proved the most wholesome, and a full and luscious diet hath caused your disease, what need you more to direct your judgment, if you will judge as men, and not as brutes?

O'j. But (you will say) it is not all sorrow that foretelleth joy: some pass from sorrow unto greater sorrow. How, then, shall we know whether our sorrows tend to worse or unto better?

Ans. It is true that there are sorrows which have no such promise as these have in the text. As, 1. The mere vindictive punishment of the wicked. 2. The sinful sorrows which men keep up in themselves, proceeding from their sinful love of creatures. 3. And the corrections which are not improved by us to our amendment and reformation.

But the promise belongeth, 1. To those sorrows which in sincerity we undergo for the sake of Christ and righteousness. 2. To those sorrows which we ourselves perform as duties, either for the dishonor of God, or the sins or miseries of others; or our penitential sorrows for our own offenses. 3. And to those sorrows of chastisement which we patiently submit to, and improve to a true amendment of our hearts and lives. For though sin be the material cause, or the meritorious cause, yet love, which maketh reformation the effect, will also make the end to be our comfort.

Ue 2. If this be God's method, condemn not, then, the generation of the just, because you see them undermost in the world, and suffer more than other men. Think it not a dishonor to them to be in poverty, prisons, banishment, or reproach, unless it be for a truly dishonorable cause. Call not men miserable, for that which God maketh the token of his love, and the prognostic of their joy. Methinks he that hath once read the Psalms xxxvii. and lxxiii.; and Matt. v. 10—12; and Job xiii. and xv.; and 2 Thess. i., and well believeth them, should never err this old condemned error any more. And yet it is common, among carnal men, to do as some

beasts do; when one of their fellows is wounded, they all forsake him: so these stand looking with pity, or fear, or strangeness upon a man that is under sufferings and slanders, as if it must needs be a deserved thing; and think it a great dishonor to a man, how innocent soever, when they hear that he is used as offenders and malefactors are; forgetting how by this they condemn their Savior, and all his apostles and martyrs, and the wisest, best, and happiest men that the earth hath borne. And all this is but the blind and hasty judgment of sense and unbelief, which hath neither the wit to judge by the word of God, nor yet the patience to stay the end, and see how the sorrows of the godly will conclude, and where the triumph of the hypocrite will leave them.

And yet some there be that are apt to err on the other extreme, and to think that every man is happy that is afflicted, and that such have all their sorrow in this life; and that the suffering party is always in the right, and therefore they are ready to fall in with any deluded sect, which they see to be under reproach and suffering. But the cause must be first known, before the suffering can be well judged of.

Doct. II. Christ's death and departure was the cause of his disciples' sorrows.

This is plain in the words "Ye now therefore have sorrow; but I will see you again." And the causes of this sorrow were these three conjunct: 1. That their dear Lord, whom they loved, and whom they had heard, and followed, and put their trust in, must now be taken from them. If the parting of friends at death do turn our garments into the signs of our sad and mournful hearts, and cause us to dwell in the houses of mourning, we must allow Christ's disciples some such affections, upon their parting with their Lord.

2. And the manner of his death, no doubt, did much increase their sorrows. That the most innocent should suffer as a reputed malefactor, that he that more contemned the wealth, and pleasures, and glory of the world, than ever man did, and chose a poor, inferior life, and would not have a kingdom of this world, and never failed in any duty to high or low, should yet be hanged ignominiously on a cross, as one that was about to usurp the crown! That deluded sinners should put to death the Lord of life, and spit in the face of such a majesty, and hasten destruction to their nation and themselves; and that all Christ's disciples must thus be esteemed the followers of a crucified usurper,—judge, if we had been in their case ourselves, whether this would have been matter of sorrow to us or not. Had it not been enough for Christ to have suffered the pain, but he must also suffer the dishonor, even the imputation of sin, which no man was so far from being guilty of? and

of that particular sin, usurpation of dominion, and treason against Cæsar, which his heart and life were as contrary to as light to darkness? And was it not enough for Christians to suffer so great calamities of bodies for righteousness' sake, but they must also suffer the reproach of being the seditious followers of a crucified malefactor whom they would have made a king? No! our Lord would stoop to the lowest condition for our sakes, which was consistent with his innocence and perfection! Sin is so much worse than suffering, that we may take this for the greatest part of his condescension, and strangest expression of his love, that he should take not only the nature and the sufferings of a man, but also the nature and the imputation of sinners. Though sin itself was inconsistent with his perfection, yet so was not the false accusation and imputation of it: he could not become a sinner for us; but he could be reputed a sinner for us, and die as such. And when our Lord hath submitted to this most ignominious kind of suffering, it is not fit that we should be the choosers of our sufferings, and say, Lord, we will suffer any thing except the reputation of being offenders, and the false accusations of malicious men! If in this we must be made conformable to our Head, we must not refuse it, nor repine at his disposal of us.

3. And their sorrow for Christ's departure was the greater, because they had so little foresight of his resurrection and return. It is strange to see how dark they were in these articles of the faith, for all their long converse with Christ, and his plain foretelling them his death and resurrection; and how much of their teaching Christ reserved to the Spirit after his departure from them. Then took he unto him the twelve, and said unto them, Behold, we go up to Jerusalem; and all things that are written by the prophets concerning the Son of man shall be accomplished; for he shall be delivered unto the Gentiles, and shall be mocked, and spitefully entreated, and spit upon, and they shall scourge him and put him to death, and the third day he shall rise again;" John xii. 16. Luke xviii. 31—34. And they understood none of these things, and this saying was hid from them, neither knew they the things which were spoken. Had they known all that would follow, and clearly foreseen his resurrection and his glory, they would then have been troubled the less for his death; but when they saw him die, and foresaw him not revive, and rise, and reign, then did their hearts begin to fail them, and they said, "We trusted that it had been he which should have redeemed Israel;" Luke xxiv. 21. Even as we use to lament immoderately, when we lay the bodies of our friends in the grave, because we see not whither the soul is gone, nor in what triumph and joy it is received unto Christ; which

if we saw, it would moderate our griefs. And even so we overpower ourselves and our friends in our temporal sufferings, because we see not whither they tend and what will follow them. We see Job on the dunghill, but look not so far as his restoration. "Behold we count them happy which endure: ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord, that the Lord is very pitiful and of tender mercy;" Jam. v. 11. There is no judging by the present, but either by staying [for] the end, or believing God's predictions of it.

Use. It is allowable in Christ's disciples to grieve (in faith and moderately) for any departure of his from them: they that have had the comfort of communion with him in a life of faith and grace, must needs lament any loss of that communion: it is sad with such a soul, when Christ seemeth strange, or when they pray and seek, and seem not to be heard. It is sad with a believer, when he must say, 'I had once access to the Father by the Son; I had helps in prayer, and I had the lively operations of the Spirit of grace, and some of the joy of the Holy Ghost; but now, alas! it is not so.' And they that have had experience of the fruit and comfort of his word, and ordinances, and discipline, and the communion of saints, may be allowed to lament the loss of this, if he take it from them. It was no unseemly thing in David, when he was driven from the tabernacle of God, to make that lamentation, "As the hart panteth after the water-brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God; my soul thirsteth for God, for the living God; when shall I come and appear before God? My tears have been my meat day and night, while they continually say unto me, Where is thy God? O my God, my soul is cast down within me," &c.; Psalm xlii. and xliii. And, "My soul longeth, yea, even fainteth for the courts of the Lord; my heart and my flesh crieth out for the living God; yea, the sparrow hath found a house, and the swallow a nest," &c. "Blessed are they that dwell in thy house; they will be still praising thee. For a day in thy courts is better than a thousand; I had rather be a door-keeper in the house of my God, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness;" Psalm lxxxiv. 2—4. It signifieth ill when men can easily let Christ go, or lose his word, or helps, and ordinances. When sin provoketh him to hide his face, and withdraw his mercies, if we can senselessly let them go, it is a contempt which provoketh him much more. If we are indifferent what he giveth us, it is just with him to be indifferent too, and to set as little by our helps and happiness as we set by them ourselves. But we little know the misery which such contempt prepareth for: "Be thou instructed, O Jerusalem, lest my soul depart from thee, lest I make thee desolate; a land not inhabited;" Jer. vi. 8. "Yea, woe also unto them when I depart from them;"

Hos. ix. 12. When God goeth, all goeth ; grace and peace, help and hope, and all that is good and comfortable, is gone when God is gone. Wonder not, therefore, if holy souls cry after God, and fear the loss of his grace and ordinances ; and if they lament the loss of that which dead-hearted sensualists are weary of, (Luke viii. 47.) and would drive away : it will be the damning sentence, (Matt. xxv. 41.) "Depart from me, all ye workers of iniquity ;" Matt. vii. 23. And, therefore, all that is but like it, is terrible to them that have any regard of God, or their salvation ; Luke xiii. 27.

Doct. III. The sorrows of Christ's disciples are but short. It is but now that they have sorrow ; and how quickly will this now be gone !

Reas. 1. Life itself is but short, and, therefore, the sorrows of this life are but short. Man that is born of a woman is of few days, and full of trouble ; he cometh forth like a flower, and is cut down ; he fleeth also as a shadow, and continueth not ; Job xiv. 1, 2. Though our days are evil, they are but few ; Gen. xlvii. 9. As our time maketh haste, and passeth away, so also do our sorrows, which will attain their period together with our lives. As the pleasure of sin, so the sufferings of the godly, are but for a season ; Heb. xi. 26. "Now, for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations ;" 1 Pet. i. 6. The pleasures and the pains of so short a life are but like a pleasant or a frightful dream : how quickly shall we awake, and all is vanished ! If we lived as long as they did before the flood, then worldly interest, prosperity, and adversity, would be of greater signification to us, and yet they should seem nothing in comparison of eternity ; for where now are all the fleshly pains or pleasures of Adam or Methuselah ? Much more are they inconsiderable in so short a life as one of ours. Happy is the man whose sorrows are of no longer continuance than this short and transitory life !

Reas. 2. God's displeasure with his servants is but short, and, therefore, his corrections are but short ; Psalm xxx. 5. "His anger endureth but for a moment, but in his favor is life ;" Isa. liv. 7, 8. "For a small moment have I forsaken thee, but with great mercy will I gather thee. In a little wrath I hid my face from thee for a moment ; but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee, saith the Lord thy Redeemer ;" Isa. xxvi. 20. "Come, my people, enter into thy chambers, and shut thy doors about thee ; hide thyself as it were for a little moment, until the indignation be overpast." Thus even in judgment doth he remember mercy, and consumeth us not, because his compassions fail not ; Lam. iii. "He will not always chide, nor will he keep his anger forever ; for he knoweth our frame, he remembereth that we are dust ;"

Psalm ciii. 9. 14. His short corrections are purposely fitted to prepare us for endless consolations.

Reas. 3. Our trial also must be but short, and, therefore, so must be our sorrows. Though God will not have us receive the crown, without the preparation of a conflict and a conquest, yet will he not have our fight and race too long, lest it overmatch our strength; and his grace, and we should be overcome. Though our faith and we must be tried in the fire, yet God will see that the furnace be not over hot, and that we stay no longer, but till our dross be separated from us; 1 Pet. i. 6, 7. 9. God putteth us not into the fire to consume us, but to refine us, (Psalm cxix. 67. 75.) that when we come out we may say, (Psalm cxix. 1—3.) "It is good for us that we were afflicted," (Psalm cxix. 71; Isaiah xlix. 13.) and then he will save the afflicted people; Psalm xviii. 27.

Reas. 4. The power of those that afflict God's servants wrongfully is but short; and, therefore, the sorrows of such affliction can be but short; though it be foreign churches of whom I speak, I hope it is to such as take their case to be to them as their own: while they are breathing out threatenings, they are ready to breathe out their guilty souls. If a man in a dropsy or consumption persecute us, we would not be over fearful of him, because we see he is a dying man. And so little is the distance between the death of one man and another, that we may well say, 'All men's lives are in a consumption, and may bear their indignation, as we would do the injuries of a dying man. How short is the day of the power of darkness! Christ calleth it but an hour; "This is your hour, and the power of darkness;" Luke xxii. 53. How quickly was Herod eaten of worms, and many another cut off in the height of their prosperity, when they have been raging in the heat of persecution. Little thought Ahab that he had been so near his woful day, when he had given order that Micaiah should be fed with the bread and water of affliction, till he returned in peace. What persecutions have the death of a Licinius, a Julian, a Queen Mary, &c., shortened! While they are raging, they are dying; while they are condemning the just, they are going to be condemned by their most just avenger. How quickly will their corpse be laid in dust, and their condemned souls be put under the chains of darkness, till the judgment of the great and dreadful day! 2 Pet. xxiv. He is not only an unbeliever, but irrational or inconsiderate, that cannot see their end (Jude 6.) in the greatest of their glory. How easy is it to see these bubbles vanishing, and to foresee the sad and speedy period of all their cruelties and triumphs! "Knowest thou not this of old, since man was placed upon earth, that the triumphing of the wicked is short, and the joy of the hypocrite but for a moment? Though his excellency mount up to the heavens,

and his head reach unto the clouds, yet he shall perish forever like his own dung. They which have seen him shall say, Where is he? He shall fly away as a dream, and shall not be found; yea, he shall be chased away as a vision of the night. The eye also which saw him shall see him no more, neither shall his place behold him;" Job xx. 4—9. Though pride do compass them about as a chain, and violence cover them as a garment, and they are corrupt, and speak oppression, or calumny, wickedly, they speak loftily, or from on high. Though they set their mouth against the heavens, and their tongue walketh through the earth, yet surely they are set in slippery places. God doth cast them down into destruction. How are they brought into desolation as in a moment? They are utterly consumed with terrors; as a dream* from one that awaketh, so, O Lord, in awaking, (or raising up, that is, saith the Chaldee paraphrase, in thy day of judging, or as all the other translations, in *civitate tua*, in thy kingdom or government,) thou shalt despise their image, that is, show them and all the world how despicable that image of greatness, and power, and felicity was which they were so proud of. If such a bubble† of vain-glory, such an image of felicity, such a dream of power and greatness be all that the church of God hath to be afraid of, it may well be said, "Cease ye from man, whose breath is in his nostrils;"‡ Isa. ii. 22. "For wherein is he to be accounted of?" Psalm cxlvi. 4. His breath goeth forth; he returneth to his earth; in that very day his thoughts perish. And, "Behold, the Lord God will help me; who is he that shall condemn me? Lo, they all shall wax old as a garment; the moth shall eat them up;" Isa. l. 9. And, "Hearken unto me, ye that know righteousness, the people in whose heart is my law. Fear ye not the reproach of men, neither be ye afraid of their revilings, for the moth shall eat them up like a garment, and the worm shall eat them like wood, but my righteousness shall be forever, and my salvation from generation to generation;" Isa. li. 7, 8. The sorrows which so short-lived power can inflict, can be but short. You read of their victories and persecutions in the news-books one year, and quickly after of their death.

Use. Hence, therefore, you may learn how injudicious they are,

* Or as Amyraldus Paraphras., "Cum olim evigilabunt, præsens eorum felicitas erit instar somnii, quod somno discusso dissipatum est: quin etiam antequam evigilent, in ipsa illa urbe in qua antea florebant vanam istam felicitatis pompam, in qua antea volitabant, reddes contemnendam, tanquam umbram aut imaginem evanescentem; in qua nihil solidi est."

† "Nubecula est cito evanescit," said Athanasius of Julian.

‡ When Julian's death was told at Antioch, they all cried out, "Maxime fatue: ubi sunt vaticinia tua? Vicit Deus et Christus ejus." Abbas Uspergus, page 81.

that think religion is disparaged by such short and small afflictions of believers, and how unexcusable they are who yield unto temptation, and venture upon sin, and comply with the ungodly, and forsake the truth, through the fear of so short and momentary sorrows, when there is none of them but would endure the prick of a pin, or the scratch of a brier, or the biting of a flea, to gain a kingdom, or the opening of a vein, or the griping of a purge to save their lives. O, how deservedly are ungodly men forsaken of God! For how short a pleasure do they forsake him, and the everlasting pleasures! And how short a trouble do they avoid by running into everlasting trouble! If sin had not first subdued reason, men would never make it a matter of question, whether, to escape so small a suffering, they should break the laws of the most righteous God, nor would they once put so short a pain or pleasure into the balance against the endless pain and pleasure. Nor would a temptation bring them to deliberate on a matter, which should be past deliberation with a man that is in his wits. And yet, alas! how much do these short concerns prevail through all the world! Unbelievers are short-sighted; they look only or chiefly to things near and present. A lease of this empty world for a few years, yea, an uncertain tenure of it, is preferred before the best security for eternal life. Its present pleasures which they must have, and its present sorrows which they take care to escape. As Christ hath taught us to say about these worldly things, so the devil hath taught them to say about everlasting things—"Care not for to-morrow, for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself; sufficient to the day is the evil thereof;" Matt. vi. 34. Therefore, when the day of their calamity shall come, a despairing conscience will perpetually torment them, and say, 'This is but the sorrow which thou choosdest to endure, or the misery which thou wouldest venture on, to escape a present, inconsiderable pain.'

If there be any of you that shall think that present sufferings are considerable things, to be put into the scales against eternity, or that are tempted to murmuring and impatience under such short afflictions, I desire them but to consider, 1. That your suffering will be no longer than your sin. And if it endure but as long, is it any matter of wonder or repining? Can you expect to keep your sickness, and yet to be wholly freed from the pain? Can sin and suffering be perfectly separated? Do you think to continue ignorant and proud, and selfish, and in so much remaining unbelief, carnality, worldliness, and sloth, and yet never to feel the rod or spur, nor suffer any more than if you had been innocent? Deceive not yourselves; it will not be; Gen. iv. 7. Sin lieth at the door; and be sure at last it will find you out; Numb. xxxii. 23. "Behold, the righteous shall be recompensed in the earth, much more

the ungodly and the sinner ;" Prov. xi. 31. " Judgment must begin at the house of God, and the righteous are saved with much ado ;" 1 Pet. iv. 17, 18. God is not reconciled to the sins of any man ; and as he will show by his dealings that he is reconciled to their persons, so will he show that he is not reconciled to their sins. If God continue your sufferings any longer than you continue your sin, and if you can truly say, ' I am afflicted though I am innocent,' then your impatience may have some excuse.

2. Your sorrows shall be no longer than you make them necessary ; and will you grudge at your own benefit ? Or at the trouble of your physic while you continue your disease ? It is but " if need be that now for a season ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations ;" 1 Peter i. 6. And who maketh the need ? Is it God or you ? Who maketh you dull, and slothful, and sensual ? Who turneth your hearts to earthly things, and deprives you of the sweetness of things spiritual and heavenly ? Who maketh you proud, and unbelieving, and uncharitable ? Is it he that doth this, that causeth the need of your afflictions, and is to be blamed for the bitterness of them ? But it is your physician that is to be thanked and praised for fitting them so wisely to your cure.

3. Your sorrows shall not be so long as you deserve. It is strange ingratitude for that man to grudge at a short affliction that is saved from everlasting misery, and confesseth he hath deserved the pains of hell. Confess with thankfulness, that " it is his mercy that you are not consumed and condemned, because his compassions fail not. If God be your portion, hope in him ; for the Lord is good to them that wait for him, to the soul that seeketh him. It is good that you both hope and quietly wait for the salvation of the Lord ; it is good for a man that he bear the yoke in his youth ; he sitteth alone and keepeth silence, because he hath borne it upon him ; he putteth his mouth in the dust, if so be there may be hope. He giveth his cheek to him that smiteth him ; he is filled full with reproach ; for the Lord will not cast off forever ; but though he cause grief, yet will he have compassion, according to the multitude of his mercies ; Lam. iii. 22—33. All that is come upon us is for our evil deeds, and for our great trespasses ; and God hath punished us less than our iniquities ; Ezra ix. 13.

4. Your sorrows shall not be so long as the sorrows of the ungodly, nor as those that you must endure, if you will choose sin to escape these present sorrows. Abel's sorrow is not so long as Cain's ; nor Peter's or Paul's so long as Judas's. If the offering of a more acceptable sacrifice do cost a righteous man his life, alas ! what is that to the punishment that malignant, envious Cainites or treacherous Judases must endure. What is the worst that man can do, or the most that God will here inflict, to the rep-

robates, endless, hellish torments? O, had you seen what they endure, or had you felt those pains but a day or hour, I can hardly think that you would ever after make so great a matter of the sufferings of a Christian here for Christ, or that you would fear such sufferings more than hell. It is disingenuous to repine at so gentle a rod, at the same time whilst millions are in the flames of hell, and when these sufferings tend to keep you thence.

5. Your sorrows shall not be so long as your following joys, if you be persevering, conquering believers. What is a sickness, or a scorn, or a prison, or banishment, or shame, or death, when it must end in the endless joys of heaven! Oh, do but believe these with a lively, sound, effectual faith, and you will make light of all the sufferings in the way. "*Nihil crus sentit in nervo*," saith Tertullian, "*cum animus est in cælo*;" Heb. xi. 25, 26, &c. The mind that is in heaven, and seeth him that is invisible, will easily bear the body's pains. Mistake not in your accounts, and you will reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us; Rom. viii. 18. "For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, doth work for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things that are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal;" 2 Cor. iv. 17, 18.

Use 2. And if it be but for a now that you must have sorrows, how reasonable is it that those sorrows be moderated and mixed with joy! And how just are those commands, "Rejoice evermore." "Rejoice and be exceeding glad, for great is your reward in heaven;" 1 Thess. v. 16. Matt. v. 10—12. "Rejoicing in hope, patient in tribulation;" Rom. xii. 12. How rational was their joy, who, being beaten and forbidden to preach, "departed from the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for the name of Christ!" Acts v. 42. "Rejoice inasmuch as ye are partakers in Christ's sufferings. If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye; for the Spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you; on their part he is evil spoken of, but on your part he is glorified;" 1 Pet. iv. 13, 14. It is a shame to be dejected under a short and tolerable pain, which is so near to the eternal pleasure, and to suffer as if we believed not the end, and so to sorrow as men that are without hope.

Doct. IV. Christ will again visit his sorrowful disciples. He removeth not from them with an intent to cast them off. When he hideth his face, he meaneth not to forsake them; when he taketh away any ordinances or mercies, he doth not give them a bill of divorce. When he seemeth to yield to the powers of darkness,

he is not overcome, nor will he give up his kingdom or interest in the world. When he letteth the boar into his vineyard, it is not to make it utterly desolate, or turn it common to the barren wilderness; for,

1. He hath conquered the greatest enemies already, and, therefore, there remaineth none to conquer him. He hath triumphed over Satan, death and hell: he hath conquered sin; and what is there left to depose him from his dominion?

2. He retaineth still his relation to his servants; whether he be corporally present or absent, he knoweth his own, and it is their care also that, whether present or absent, they may be accepted of him; 2 Cor. v. 7—9. He is their head while they are suffering on earth, and, therefore, he feeleth their sufferings and infirmities; Heb. iv. 15. And hence it is that he thus rebuketh a persecuting zealot, "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?" Acts ix. 4.

3. He hath not laid by the least measure of his love; he loveth us in heaven as much as he did on earth: "Having loved his own which were in the world, to the end he loved them;" John xiii.

1. And as Joseph's love could not long permit him to conceal himself from his brethren, but broke out the more violently after a short restraint, so that he fell on their necks and wept; so will not the more tender love of Christ permit him long to hide his face, or estrange himself from the people of his love, and when he returneth, it will be with redoubled expressions of endearment.

4. His covenant with his servants is still in force; his promises are sure, and shall never be broken, though the performance be not so speedy as we desire. "Know, therefore, that the Lord thy God he is God, the faithful God, which keepeth covenant and mercy with them that love him and keep his commandments, to a thousand generations; and repayeth them that hate him to their face to destroy them; he will not be slack to him that hateth him; he will repay him to his face;" Deut. vii. 9. "He keepeth covenant and mercy with his servants that walk before him with all their heart;" 1 Kings viii. 23. Dan. ix. 4. Neh. i. 5. and ix. 32. And it is the promise of Christ, when he departed from his servants, that "He will come again and take them to himself, that where he is, there they may be also;" John xiv. 3. and xii. 26.

5. His own interest, and honor, and office, and preparations, do engage him to return to his disconsolate flock: his jewels and peculiar treasure are his interest; Mal. iii. 17. 1 Pet. ii. 9. Exodus xix. 5. He that hath chosen but a little flock, (Luke xii. 32.) and confineth his interest and treasure into such a narrow compass, will not forsake that little flock, but secure them to his

kingdom. He that hath made it his office to redeem and save them, and hath so dearly bought them, and gone so far in the work of their salvation, will lose none of all his cost and preparations; but for his people, and his blood, and his honor, and his Father's will, and love, will certainly finish what he hath undertaken. And therefore his withdrawings shall not be everlasting.

6. It is for their sakes that he withdraweth for a time: though the bitter part be for their sin, it is intended as medicinal for their benefit: sometimes he doth it to awake and humble them, and stir them up to seek him, and call after him; to show them what they have done in provoking him to withdraw, and hide his face, that renewed repentance may prepare them for the comforts of his return. Sometimes he hath such work for them to do, which is not so agreeable to his presence; as fasting, and mourning, and confessing him in sufferings; Matt. ix. 15. And sometimes he hath comforts of another kind to give them in his seeming absence. "I tell you the truth; it is expedient for you that I go away; for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him to you;" John xvi. 7. As there were comforts which the disciples were fittest for in Christ's bodily absence, so, when he will take away his ordinances, or our prosperity or friends, there are comforts of another sort, in secret communion with him, and in suffering for him, which his people may expect; not that any can expect it, who on that pretense do reject these ordinances and mercies, no more than the disciples could have expected the Comforter, if they had rejected the corporal presence of Christ; but God hath such supplies for those that mourn for his departure.

Use 1. Misunderstand not, then, the departings of your Lord. It is too bad to say with the evil servant, "My Lord delayeth his coming;" and worse to say he will never return. 1. He will return at his appointed day to judge the world; to justify his saints, whom the world condemned; to answer the desires, and satisfy all the expectations of believers; and to comfort and everlastingly reward the faithful that have patiently waited his return. And when he returneth with salvation, then shall we also return from our calamities, and shall discern between the righteous and the wicked, between him that served God, and him that served him not; Mal. iii. 19. Undoubtedly our "Redeemer liveth, and shall stand at the latter day upon the earth; and though, after our skin, worms devour these bodies, yet in our flesh shall we see God; Job xix. 25, 26. "Behold he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him; and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him. Even so, Amen;" Rev. i. 7. Though unbelieving scoffers shall say, "Where is the

promise of his coming?" 2 Pet. iii. 4. Yet believers consider, "That a day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years but as a day; and that the Lord is not slack of his promise, but long-suffering;" ver. 8, 9. "He will not leave us comfortless, but will come unto us;" John xiv. 18. "The patient expectation of the just shall not be forgotten, nor in vain;" Psalm ix. 7, 8. "Seeing it is a righteous thing with God to recompense tribulation to them that trouble you; and to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ; who shall be punished with everlasting destruction, from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power; when he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and admired in all them that believe in that day;" 2 Thess. i. 6—10.

2. And he will return also to the seemingly forsaken flocks of his disciples: he hath his times of trial, when the shepherds being smitten the sheep are scattered; and he hath his times of gathering the scattered ones again together, and "giving them pastors after his own heart, that shall feed them with knowledge and understanding;" Jer. iii. 14, 15. And shall say, "What is the chaff unto the wheat;" Jer. xxiii. 28. When we cry, "Woe is me for my hurt; my wound is grievous!" We must also say, "Truly this is a grief, and I must bear it; my tabernacle is spoiled, and all my cords are broken; my children are gone forth of me, and they are not; there is none to stretch forth my tent any more, and to set up my curtains; for the pastors are become brutish, and have not sought the Lord. O Lord, correct me, but with judgment, not in thine anger, lest thou bring me to nothing;" Jer. x. 19—21. 24. "Many pastors have destroyed my vineyard; they have trodden my portion under foot, they have made my pleasant portion a desolate wilderness; and being desolate it mourneth to me: the whole land is made desolate, because no man layeth it to heart;" Jer. xii. 10, 11. "But woe be unto the pastors that destroy and scatter the sheep of my pasture, saith the Lord. Therefore, thus saith the Lord, against the pastors that feed my people, Ye have scattered my flock, and driven them away, and have not visited them; behold, I will visit upon you the evil of your doings, and I will gather the remnant of my flock. And I will set up shepherds over them which shall feed them, and they shall fear no more, nor be dismayed, neither shall they be lacking, saith the Lord;" Ezek. xxxiv. "Woe to the shepherds of Israel that feed themselves; should not the shepherds feed the flocks? Ye eat the fat, and clothe you with the wool; ye kill them that are fed, but ye feed not the flocks. The diseased have ye not strengthen-

ed, neither have ye healed that which was sick, neither have ye bound up that which was broken, neither have ye brought again that which was driven away, neither have ye sought that which was lost; but with force and with cruelty have ye ruled them. Thus saith the Lord, Behold, I am against the shepherds, and I will require my flock at their hands, and cause them to cease from feeding the flock; neither shall the shepherds feed themselves any more; for I will deliver my flock from their mouth. Behold, I, even I, will both search my sheep and seek them out, and will deliver them out of all places where they have been scattered in the cloudy and dark day. And as for you, O my flock, Behold, I judge between cattle and cattie, between the rams and the he-goats. Is it a small thing to you to have eaten up the good pasture, but ye must tread down with your feet the residue of your pastures? and to have drank of the deep waters, but you must foul the residue with your feet? And as for my flock, they eat that which you have trodden with your feet, and they drink that which ye have fouled with your feet. Therefore, thus saith the Lord God unto them, Behold, I, even I, will judge between the fat cattie and the lean! Because ye have thrust with side and with shoulder, and pushed all the diseased with your horns, till ye have scattered them abroad," &c. Read the rest. Particular churches may be scattered to dissolution, but none of the faithful members.

3. And Christ hath his returning time, to the souls of his servants which seem to be forsaken by him: "Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning;" Psalm xxx. 5. When he seemeth their enemy, and writeth bitter things against them, he is their surest friend, and will justify them himself from their accusers. Though they may be troubled when they remember God, and their spirit be overwhelmed in them, and their souls refuse to be comforted, and say, Will the Lord cast off forever, and will he be favorable no more? Is his mercy clean gone forever? Doth his promise fail for evermore? Hath God forgotten to be gracious? Hath he in anger shut up his tender mercies? Yet must we rebuke this unbelief, and say, This is my infirmity; I will remember the works of the Lord; surely I will remember thy wonders of old. I will meditate of thy works, and talk of thy doings;" Psalm lxxvii. The long night that hath no day, the long winter that hath no summer, is the reward of the ungodly; but light ariseth to the righteous in his darkness, and "joy to them that are upright in heart;" Psalm xcii. 4. Light is sown for them, and in season will spring up; Psalm xcvi. 11. The righteousness which was hid from the world by false accusations, and from ourselves by the terrors and mistakes of darkness, will

God "bring forth as light, and our judgment as the noon-day;" Psalm xxxvii. 6. Our eclipse will vanish when the sun returneth, and our sins no longer interpose: and though all our inquiries and complainings have not brought us out of the dark, yet "God is the Lord who showeth us light;" (Psalm cxviii. 27.) "and in his light we shall see light;" Psalm xxxvi. 9. Say then, O distrustful, trembling Christian, "Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou thus disquieted within me? Hope thou in God, for I shall yet praise him, who is the health of my countenance and my God;" Psalm xlii. 5. 11. and xliii. 5. Though now you "go mourning because of the oppression of the enemy, God will send out his light and truth, and they shall lead you, and bring you to his holy hill and tabernacle; and then you shall go with praise to the altar of God, even of God your exceeding joy;" Psalm xlii. 2—4.

Use 2. Learn, then, how to behave yourselves in the absence of your Lord, till his return. If you ask me how:—*Ans.* 1. Be not content and pleased with his absence. You must bear it, but not desire it. Else you are either enemies, or children that have run themselves into such guilt and fears, that they take their father for their enemy. 2. Nay, be not too indifferent and insensible of your Lord's departure. Love is not regardless of the company of our beloved. He may well take it ill, when you can let him go, and be as merry without him as if his absence were no loss to you. If you care no more for him, he will make you care, before you shall feel the comforts of his presence. Such contempt is the way to a worse forsaking: call after him till he return, if he hide his face. 3. Turn not aside to the creature for content, and seek not to make up the loss of his presence with any of the deceitful comforts of the world. Let him not see you take another in his stead, as if riches, or power, or worldly friends, or fleshly pleasure, would serve your turn instead of Christ. If once you come to this, he may justly leave you to your vain contents, and let them serve your turn as long as they can, and see how well they will supply his room. O, see that no idol be admitted into his place till Christ return. 4. Be not imboldened, by his absence, to sin. Say not, as the evil servant, in your hearts, 'My Lord delayeth his coming,' and so begin to smite your fellow-servants, and to eat, and drink with the drunken, lest your "Lord come in a day when you look not for him, and cut you asunder, and appoint your portion with the hypocrites: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth;" Matt. xxiv. 48—51. Because Christ cometh not to judge the wicked as soon as they have sinned, they are imboldened to sin more fearlessly; and because sentence against an evil work is not speedily executed, therefore the hearts

of the sons of men are fully set in them to do evil ;" Eccles. viii. 11. But " behold, the Judge is at the door ;" James v. 9. " He that cometh will not tarry ; and for all these things you must come to judgment ;" Eccles. xi. 9. and xii. 14. 5. Be not discouraged by your Lord's delay, but wait his coming in faith and patience. Can you not wait for him so short a time ? O, how quickly will it be accomplished ! Sink not into despondency of mind. Be not dismayed in the duties or sufferings to which you are called. " Lift up the hands that hang down, and the feeble knees, and make straight paths for your feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way, but let it rather be healed ;" Heb. xii. 12, 13. " Be steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord ;" 1 Cor. xv. 58. " Be sober, and hope unto the end ;" 1 Pet. i. 13. " Ye are the house of Christ, if ye hold fast the confidence, and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end ;" Heb. iii. 6. 14. and vi. 11. " Ye have need of patience, that, having done the will of God, ye may inherit the promise ;" Heb. x. 36. 11.

Doct. V. " When Christ shall again appear to his disciples, their sorrows shall be turned into joy : when Christ returneth, joy returneth," saith David ; Psal. xxx. 7. " Thou didst hide thy face, and I was troubled." But (v. 11, 12.) " Thou hast turned for me my mourning into dancing ; thou hast put off my sackcloth, and girded me with gladness, to the end that my glory may sing praise to thee, and not be silent : O Lord, my God, I will give thanks unto thee forever." When the sun ariseth, it is day, and its approach dispelleth the winter frosts, and reviveth the almost dying creatures, and calleth up the life which was hidden in the seed, or retired unto the root, after a sharp and spending winter. How quickly doth the sun's return recover the verdure and beauty of the earth, and clothe it in green, and spangle it with the ornaments of odoriferous flowers, and enrich it with sweet and plenteous fruits ! The birds that were either hid or silent, appear and sing, and the face of all things is changed into joy. So is it, 1. With the poor, deserted soul, upon the return of Christ : unbelieving doubts and fears then vanish ; the garments of sadness are laid aside, and those of gladness are put on ; the language of distrust and despairing lamentations are first turned into words of peace, and then into joyful thankfulness and praise. The soul that was skilled in no spiritual discourse, but complaining of a dead and frozen heart, of dull, and cold, and lifeless duties, is now taken up in the rehearsals of the works of infinite love, and searching into the mysteries of redemption, and reciting the great and precious promises, and magnifying the name and grace of its Redeemer, and expatiating in

the praises of the everlasting kingdom, the heavenly glory, the blessed society, and especially of the Lamb and of the eternal God. You would not think that this is the same person, that lately could scarce think well of God, or that dwelt in tears, and dust, and darkness, and could think of nothing but sin and hell, and from every text and every providence, concluded nothing but undone, or damned: would you think this joyful, thankful soul were the same that lately was crying on the cross, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" that could find nothing written on the tables of his heart, but forsaken, miserable and undone; that daily cried out, 'It is too late; there is no hope; I had a day of grace, but it is past and gone.' When Christ returneth, and causeth his face to shine upon them, all this is turned into 'Praise, and honor, and glory unto the Lamb, and to the almighty and most holy God, that liveth forever, and is the everlasting joy and portion of his saints.' And, sooner or later, thus will it be with all the upright, that wait on God in the day of trial, and deal not falsely in his covenant. The Son, who was brought up with the Father, and was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him; rejoicing, also, in the habitable parts of the earth, whose delights were with the sons of men, doth bless the children of wisdom with a participation of his delights; for "Blessed are they that keep his ways."—"Blessed is the man that heareth him, watching daily at his gates, waiting at the posts of his doors; for he that findeth him findeth life, and shall obtain favor of the Lord;" Prov. vii. 30—36. Though Christ had left his disciples so lately under fears and trouble, guilty of deserting him, and, seemingly, now deserted by him; yet, early on the third day, he ariseth for their consolation, and presently sendeth them these joyful words, in the first speech he uttereth, and that by a woman that had been sorrowful and a sinner—"Go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend to my Father and your Father, and to my God and your God;" John xx. 17. Those that his ministers have long been comforting in vain, when Christ returneth he will revive and comfort them in a moment, and with a word. The soul that now crieth, 'O, it is impossible; it will never be,' doth little know how easy it is with Christ. It is but saying, "Lazarus, arise;" or, "Let there be light," and there will be life and light immediately at his command.

2. And so, when he restoreth his ordinances and order to a forsaken church, and restoreth their holy opportunities and advantages of grace, what gladness and praising their Redeemer will there be! as it was with the churches upon the death of Julian, and after the heathen and the Arian persecutions, in the happy reign of Constantine, Theodosius, Marcian, &c. How joyfully did the English exiles return to worship God in their native land,

upon the death of Queen Mary ; and see the fall of Bonner and Gardiner, that had sacrificed so many holy Christians in the flames ! How gladly did they grow in the soil that was manured with the blood and ashes of their faithful brethren, and reap the fruit of their fortitude and sufferings ! When Christ whipped the buyers and sellers out of the temple, and would not let them make the house of prayer a place of merchandise, what hosannas were sounded in Jerusalem ! Matt. xxi. 15, 16. "When the salvation of Israel cometh out of Zion, and the Lord bringeth back the captivity of his people, Jacob shall rejoice, and Israel shall be glad ;" Psal. xiv. 7. "Blessed are they that dwell in his house, for they will be still praising him. For a day in his courts is better than a thousand ;" Psal. lxxxiv. 4. 10. "Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound ; they shall walk, O Lord, in the light of thy countenance ; in thy name shall they rejoice all the day, and in thy righteousness shall they be exalted ; for the Lord is our defense, and the Holy One of Israel is our king ;" Psal. lxxxix. 15—18. What gladness was there at a private meeting of a few Christians that met to pray for Peter, when they saw him delivered and come among them ;" Acts xii. 12. and v. 14. When the churches had rest, they were edified, and walked in the fear of the Lord, and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost ; Acts ix. 31.

3. But the great joy will be when Christ returneth in his glory at the last day. What a multitude of sorrows will there be ended ! And what a multitude of souls will then be comforted ! What a multitude of desires, and prayers, and expectations will then be answered ! How many thousand that have sowed in tears shall then reap in everlasting joy ! When the creature shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption, into the glorious liberty of the sons of God ; Rom. viii. 26, 27. When all the faith, and labor, and patience of all the saints, from the beginning of the world, shall be rewarded with the rivers of celestial pleasure, and the just shall enter into their Master's joy ; Matt. xxv. 21.

That you may the better understand the sweetness of all these sorts of joy, which Christ's return will bring to saints, observe these following ingredients in them :—

1. It is Christ himself that is the object of their joy ; he that is the dearly beloved of their souls ; that, for their sakes, was made a man of sorrows ; it is he who is their hope and help ; with whom they are in covenant as their only Savior ; in whom they have trusted, with whom they have deposed their souls ! If he should fail them, all would fail them ; and they were, of all men, most miserable : they would be comfortless if he should not come unto them, and were not their comfort. The world cannot help and comfort them, for it is empty, vain, a transient shadow : it will not,

for it is malignant, and our professed enemy. For we know that we are of God, and the whole world is *in maligno positus*, set on wickedness, (or, as some think, because *ὁ πονηρός*; is put for the devil in the foregoing verse, and the article here also used,) is, as it were, planted into the devil, or put under the devil, to war against Christ and the holy seed; and indeed, Satan seemeth, in this war against the church, to have somewhat like success as he had against Christ himself: as Christ must be a man of sorrows and scorn, and be crucified as a blasphemer and a traitor, before he rejoice the hearts of his disciples by his resurrection, so the church was a persecuted, scorned handful of men, for the first three hundred years, and then it rose by Christian emperors to some reputation, till Satan, by another game, overcame them by Judas his successors; that for, 'what will you give me' by pride and worldliness betrayed them into that deplorable state, in which they have continued these 900 years at least; so that the Christian name is confined to a sixth part of the world; and serious, sanctified believers are persecuted more by the hypocrites that wear the livery of Christ, than by heathens and infidels themselves. And when the church is so low, almost like Christ on the cross and the grave, will not a resurrection be a joyful change? When it crieth out on the cross, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" will not Christ, appearing for its deliverance, be a welcome sight?

It was when Adam had brought a curse on himself and his posterity, and all the earth, that redemption, by the holy seed, was promised; and when Satan had conquered man, that Christ was promised to conquer him. It was when the world was destroyed by the deluge, that its reparation was promised to Noah: it was when Abraham was a sojourner in a strange land, that the peculiar promises were made to him and his seed. It was when the Israelites were enslaved to extremity, that they were delivered. And it was when the sceptre was departing from Judah, and they and the world were gone from God, that Christ, the light of the world, was sent. And when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth? When we see how vast the heathen and infidel kingdoms are, and what a poor, despised people those are that set their chief hopes on heaven, and how Satan seemeth every where to prevail against them, and most by false and worldly Christians, what a trial is this to our faith and hope! As the disciples said of a crucified Christ, we trusted it had been he that should have redeemed Israel; we are almost ready, in the hour of temptation, to say, we trusted that God's name should have been hallowed, and his kingdom come, and his will be done on earth as it is in heaven. And, O, how seasonable and how joyful will the church's resurrection be after such low and sad distress! Many a sad

Christian, under the sentence of death, is going hence with fear and trouble, when a moment shall transmit them into the joyful presence of their Lord, and the possession of that which, with weakness and fear, they did but believe.

2. And Christ will not come or be alone: with him will come the New Jerusalem: he will put glory on each member, but much more on the whole. O, how many of our old companions are now there! Not under temptation, or any of the tempter's power! Not under the darkness of ignorance, error, or unbelief! Not under the pains of a languid, diseased, corruptible body! Not under the fear of sin, or Satan, or wicked men; not under the terror of death or hell, of an accusing conscience, or the wrath of God: O, with what joy shall we see and enjoy that glorious society! To be translated thither from such a world as this; from such temptations, sins; such fears and sorrows; such perfidious, malignant wickedness; what will it be but to be taken as from a jail unto a kingdom, and from the suburbs of hell unto the communion of blessed saints and angels, and into the joy of our Lord!

Doct. VI. Your joy shall no man take from you: the joy that cometh at Christ's return will be a secure and everlasting joy. Impregnable as heaven itself, Christ and his church will be crucified no more. Look not, then, for Christ and his church in the grave. He is not here; he is risen. Who, can we fear, will deprive us of that joy?

1. Not ourselves; and then we need to fear no other: our folly and sin is our enemies' strength; they can do nothing against us without ourselves. The arrows that wound us are all feathered from our own wings. But our trying time will then be past, and confirmation will be the reward of conquest. He that hath kept us in the day of our trial, will keep us in our state of rest and triumph. How the (now) fallen angels came to lose their first innocency and welfare, is unknown to us: but we have a promise of being forever with Christ.

2. Nor shall devils deprive us of that joy; neither by those malicious temptations wherewith they now molest and haunt us; not by the unhappy advantages which we have given them by our sin, to corrupt our imaginations, and thoughts, and affections, or to disturb our passions, or pervert our understandings. Nor by any terror or violence to molest us.

3. Nor shall any men take from us that joy: the blessed will increase it: their joy will be ours; and the wicked will be utterly disabled; they will be miserable themselves in hell. They will no more endanger us by flattering temptation; nor terrify us by threats; nor tread us down by their power; nor hurt us in their

malice; nor render us odious by false accusations; nor triumph over us with pride and false reproach. They that said of the church, as of Christ, "He trusted in God; let him deliver him now if he will have him; for he hath said, I am the Son of God;" (Matt. xxvii. 43.) they shall see that God hath delivered his church, and he will have it.

Use 1. And will not a firm belief of all this rejoice the soul under all disappointments and sufferings on earth? And doth not our dejectedness and want of joy declare the sinful weakness of our faith? O, sirs, our sadness, our impatience, our small desire to be with Christ, the little comfort that we fetch from heaven do tell us, that Christianity, and a life of faith, is a harder work than most imagine; and the art, and form, and words of holiness are much more common than a holy, heavenly mind and life. Christ speaketh many words of pity to his servants under sorrows and sinking grief, which some mistake for words of approbation or command. "Why are ye afraid, O ye of little faith?" were words both of compassion and reproof. I am sure the great unbelief that appeareth in much of our dejectedness and sorrow, deserveth more reproof than our sufferings deserve to be entertained with those sorrows.

Use 2. I will, therefore, take my farewell of you, in advising, and charging you, as from God, that you be not deceived by a flattering world, nor dejected by a frowning world, but place your hopes on those joys which no man can take from you. If you cannot trust the love of God, and the grace and promises of our Savior, and the witness of the Holy Spirit, you must despair; for there is no other trust.

So many of you seem to have chosen this good part, the one thing necessary, which shall never be taken from you, that, in the midst of our sorrows, I must profess that I part with you with thankfulness and joy. And I will tell you for what I am so thankful, that you may know what I would have you be for the time to come.

I. I thank the Lord, that chose for me so comfortable a station, even a people whom he purposed to bless.

II. I thank the Lord that I have not labored among you in vain, and that he opened the hearts of so great a number of yours, to receive his word with a teachable and willing mind.

III. I thank the Lord that he hath made so many of you as helpful to your neighbors in your place as I have been in mine; and that you have not been uncharitable to the souls of others, but have, with great success, endeavored the good of all.

IV. I rejoice that God hath kept you humble, that you have

not been addicted to proud ostentation of your gifts or wisdom ; nor inclined to invade any part of the sacred office, but to serve God in the capacity where he hath placed you.

V. I rejoice that God hath made you unanimous, and kept out sects, and heresies, and schisms, so that you have served him as with one mind and mouth ; and that you have not been addicted to proud wranglings, disputings, and contentions, but have lived in unity, love and peace, and the practice of known and necessary truths.

VI. I rejoice that your frequent meetings in your houses, spent only in reading, repeating your teacher's sermons, prayer and praise to God, have had none of those effects which the conventicles of proud opiniators and self-conceited persons use to have, and which have brought even needful converse and godly communication into suspicion, at least with some that argue against duty from the abuse.

Yea, I rejoice that hereby so much good hath been done by you. You have had above forty years' experience of the great benefit of such well-ordered Christian converse, increasing knowledge, quickening holy desires, prevailing with God, for marvelous, if not miraculous answers of your earnest prayers, keeping out errors and sects.

VII. I am glad that you have had the great encouragement of so many sober, godly, able, peaceable ministers, in all that part of the country round about you, and mostly through that and the neighbor countries ; men that avoided vain and bitter contentions, that engaged themselves in no sects or factions ; that, of a multitude, not above two, that I know of, in all our association, had ever any hand in wars ; but their principles and practices were reconciling and pacificatory : they consented to catechise all their parishioners, house by house, and to live in the peaceable practice of so much church discipline, as good Christians of several parties were all agreed in. And you have lived to see what that discipline was, and what were the effects of such agreement.

VIII. I am glad that you were kept from taking the solemn league and covenant, and the engagement, and all consent to the change of the constituted government of this kingdom. I took the covenant myself, of which I repent, and I will tell you why : I never gave it but to one man, (that I remember,) and he professed himself to be a Papist physician newly turned Protestant, and he came to me to give it him. I was persuaded that he took it in false dissimulation, and it troubled me to think what it was to draw multitudes of men, by carnal interest, so falsely to take it ; and I kept it and the engagement from being taken in your town and country. At first, it was not imposed, but taken by volunteers ; but after that it was made a test of such as were to be trusted or

accepted. Besides the illegality, there are two things that cause me to be against it.

1. That men should make a mere dividing engine, and pretend it a means of unity : we all knew, at that time, when it was imposed, that a great part, if not the greatest, of church and kingdom were of another mind ; and that as learned and worthy men were for prelacy, as most the world had (such as Usher, Morton, Hall, Davenant, Brownrig, &c.) And to make our terms of union to be such, as should exclude so many, and such men, was but to imitate those church dividers and persecutors, who, in many countries and ages, have still made their own impositions the engines of division, by pretense of union. And it seemeth to accuse Christ, as if he had not sufficiently made us terms of concord, but we must devise our own forms as necessary thereto.

2. And it was an imposing on the providence of God, to tie ourselves by vows to that as unchangeable, which we knew not but God might after change, as if we had been the masters of his providence. No man then knew but that God might so alter many circumstances, as might make some things sins, that were then taken for duty ; and some things to be duty, which then passed for sin. And when such changes come, we that should have been content with God's obligations, do find ourselves insnared in our own rash vows.

And I wish that it teach no other men the way of dividing impositions, either to cut the knot, or to be even with the Covenanters.

IX. I greatly rejoice, that family religion is so conscionably kept up among you, that your children and apprentices seem to promise us a hopeful continuation of piety among you.

X. And I thank God, that so great a number of persons, eminent for holiness, temperance, humility and charity are safely got to heaven already, since I first came among you, and, being escaped from the temptations and troubles of this present evil world, have left you the remembrance of their most imitable examples.

And having all this comfort in you, as to what is past, I shall once more leave you some of my counsels and requests, for the time to come, which I earnestly entreat you not to neglect.

I. Spend most of your studies in confirming your belief of the truth of the gospel, the immortality of the soul, and the life to come, and in exercising that belief, and laying up your treasure in heaven ; and see that you content not yourselves in talking of heaven, and speaking for it ; but that your hopes, your hearts, and your conversation be there ; and that you live for it, as worldlings do for the flesh.

II. Flatter not yourselves with the hopes of long life on earth,

but make it the sum of all your religion, care and business, to be ready for a safe and comfortable death; for, till you can fetch comfort from the life to come, you can have no comfort that true reason can justify.

III. Live as in a constant war against all fleshly lusts, and love not the world, as it cherisheth those lusts. Take heed of the love of money, as the root of manifold evils; think of riches with more fear than desire; seeing Christ hath told us how hard and dangerous it maketh our way to heaven. When once a man falls deeply in love with riches, he is never to be trusted, but becomes false to God, to all others, and to himself.

IV. Be furnished beforehand with expectation and patience for all evils that may befall you; and make not too great a matter of sufferings, especially poverty, or wrong from men. It is sin and folly in poor men, that they overvalue riches, and be not thankful for their peculiar blessings. I am in hopes that God will give you more quietness than many others, because there are none of you rich: it is a great means of safety to have nothing that tempteth another man's desire, nor that he envieth you for; despised men live quietly, and he that hath an empty purse can sing among the robbers; he that lieth on the ground feareth not falling. When Judea (and so when England by Saxons, Danes, &c.) was conquered, the poor were let alone to possess and till the land, and had more than before. It was the great and rich that were destroyed, or carried, or driven away. Is it not a great benefit to have your souls saved from rich men's temptations, and your bodies from the envy, assaults, and fears, and miseries that they are under?

V. Take heed of a self-conceited, unhumbed understanding, and of hasty and rash conclusions: it is the fool that rageth and is confident; sober men are conscious of so much darkness and weakness, that they are suspicious of their apprehensions: proud self-conceitedness, and rash, hasty concluding, causeth most of the mischiefs in the world; which might be prevented, if men had the humility and patience to stay till things be thoroughly weighed and tried. Be not ashamed to profess uncertainty, where you are indeed uncertain. Humble doubting is much safer than confident erring.

VI. Maintain union and communion with all true Christians on earth; and, therefore, hold to catholic principles of mere Christianity, without which you must needs crumble into sects. Love Christians as Christians, but the best most: locally separate from none, as accusing of them further than they separate from Christ, or deny you their communion, unless you will sin. The zeal of a sect, as such, is partial, turbulent, hurtful to dissenters, and maketh

men as thorns and thistles; but the zeal of Christianity, as such, is pure and peaceable, full of mercy, and good fruits, mellow and sweet, and inclineth to the good of all. If God give you a faithful, or a tolerable public minister, be thankful to God, and love, honor, and encourage him; and let not the imperfections of the Common Prayer make you separate from his communion: prejudice will make all modes of worship different from that which we prefer, to seem some heinous, sinful crime; but humble Christians are most careful about the frame of their own hearts, and conscious of so much faultiness in themselves, and all their service of God, that they are not apt to accuse and aggravate the failings of others, especially in matters which God has left to our own determination. Whether we shall pray with a book, or without, in divers short prayers, or one long one; whether the people shall sing God's praise in tunes, or speak it in prose, &c., is left to be determined by the general rules of concord, order, and edification. Yet do not withdraw from the communion of soberly, godly non-conformists, though falsely called schismatics by others.

VII. Be sure that you maintain due honor and subjection to your governors: "Fear the Lord, and the king, and meddle not with them that are given to change;" Prov. xxiv. 21. And that, in regard of the oath of God, (Eccles. viii. 2.) "Curse not the king, no, not in thy thought, and curse not the rich in thy bed-chamber; for a bird of the air shall carry the voice, and that which hath wings shall tell the matter;" Eccles. x. 20. Obey God with your first and absolute obedience, and no man against him; but obey the just commands of magistrates, and that out of obedience to God; and suffer patiently when you cannot obey. And if God should ever cast you under oppressing and persecuting governors, in your patience possess your souls; trust God and keep your innocency, and abhor all thoughts of rebellion or revenge; he that believeth will not make haste. Do nothing but what God will own, and then commit yourselves and your way to him. Repress wrath, and hate unpeaceable counsels; our way and our time must be only God's way and time. Self-saving men are usually the destroyers of themselves and others. Peter, that drew his sword for Christ, denied him the same night, with oaths and curses. Fools trust themselves, and wise men trust God: fools tear the tree by beating down the fruit that is unripe and harsh; and wise men stay till it is ripe and sweet, and will drop into their hands: fools rip up the mother for an untimely birth; but wise men stay till maturity give it them. Fools take red-hot iron to be gold, till it burn their fingers to the bone; they rush into seditions and blood, as if it were a matter of jest; but wise men sow the fruit of righteousness in peace, and, as much as in them lieth, live

peaceably with all men: all men are mortal, both oppressors and oppressed: stay a little, and mortality will change the scene: God's time is best. Martyrdom seldom killeth the hundredth part so many as wars do; and he is no true believer that taketh martyrdom to be his loss; and Christ is more interested in his gospel, church, and honor, than we. Queen Mary's cruelties, and the bishops' bonfires, made religion universally received the more easily when her short reign was ended. We may learn wit of the fool, that, seeing great guns and muskets, asked what they were to do; and the answerer said, to 'kill men:' saith he, 'Do not men die here without killing? In our country, they will die of themselves.'

VIII. Be sure that you keep up family religion; especially in the careful education of youth. Keep them from evil company and from temptations; and especially of idleness, fullness, and baits of lust. Read the Scripture, and good books, and call upon God, and sing his praise; and recreate youth with reading the history of the church, and the lives of holy men and martyrs: instruct them in catechisms and fundamentals.

IX. Above all, live in love to God and man; and let not selfishness and worldliness prevail against it. Think of God's goodness, as equal to his greatness and wisdom; and take yourselves as members of the same body with all true Christians. Blessed are they that faithfully practice those three grand principles which all profess, viz. 1. To love God as God above all, (and so to obey him.) 2. To love our neighbors as ourselves. 3. And to do as we would be done by. Love is not envious, malignant, censorious; it slandereth not; it persecuteth not; it oppresseth not; it defraudeth not; it striveth not to gain by another's loss: get men once to love their neighbors as themselves, and you may easily prognosticate peace, quietness, and concord; happiness to the land; and salvation to the people's souls.

Finally, brethren, live in love, and the God of love and peace shall be among you. The Lord save you from the evils of which I have here, and often warned you. Remember, with thankfulness, the many years of abundant mercy which we have enjoyed, (though too much mixed with our sins, and vilified by some.) "Comfort yourselves together, and edify one another, even as also ye do; and I beseech you, brethren, to know them which labor among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you, and to esteem them very highly in love, for their work sake, and be at peace among yourselves;" 1 Thess. v. 11—13. And the Lord deeply write on all our hearts these blessed words, "We have known and believed the love that God hath to us: God is love, and he that dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God, and God in him;" 1 John iv. 16. And remember, "Seeing all these things

shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness, looking for and hasting the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens, being on fire, shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat ; nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness ;" 2 Peter iii. 11—13.

I need not lengthen my counsels further to you now, having been called by the will and providence of God to leave behind me a multitude of books, which may remember you of what you heard, and acquaint the world what doctrine I have taught you ; and if longer studies shall teach me to retract and amend many failings, in the writings or practice of my unripe and less experienced age, as it will be to myself as pleasing as the cure of bodily disease, I hope it will not seem strange or ungrateful to you : though we must hold fast the truth which we have received, both you and I are much to be blamed, if we grow not in knowledge, both in matter, words, and method : the Lord grant that also we may grow in faith, obedience, patience in hope, love, and desire to be with Christ.

Now, the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you perfect in every good work, to do his will, working in you that which is well-pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen. Heb. xiii. 20, 21.

HOW TO DO GOOD TO MANY:

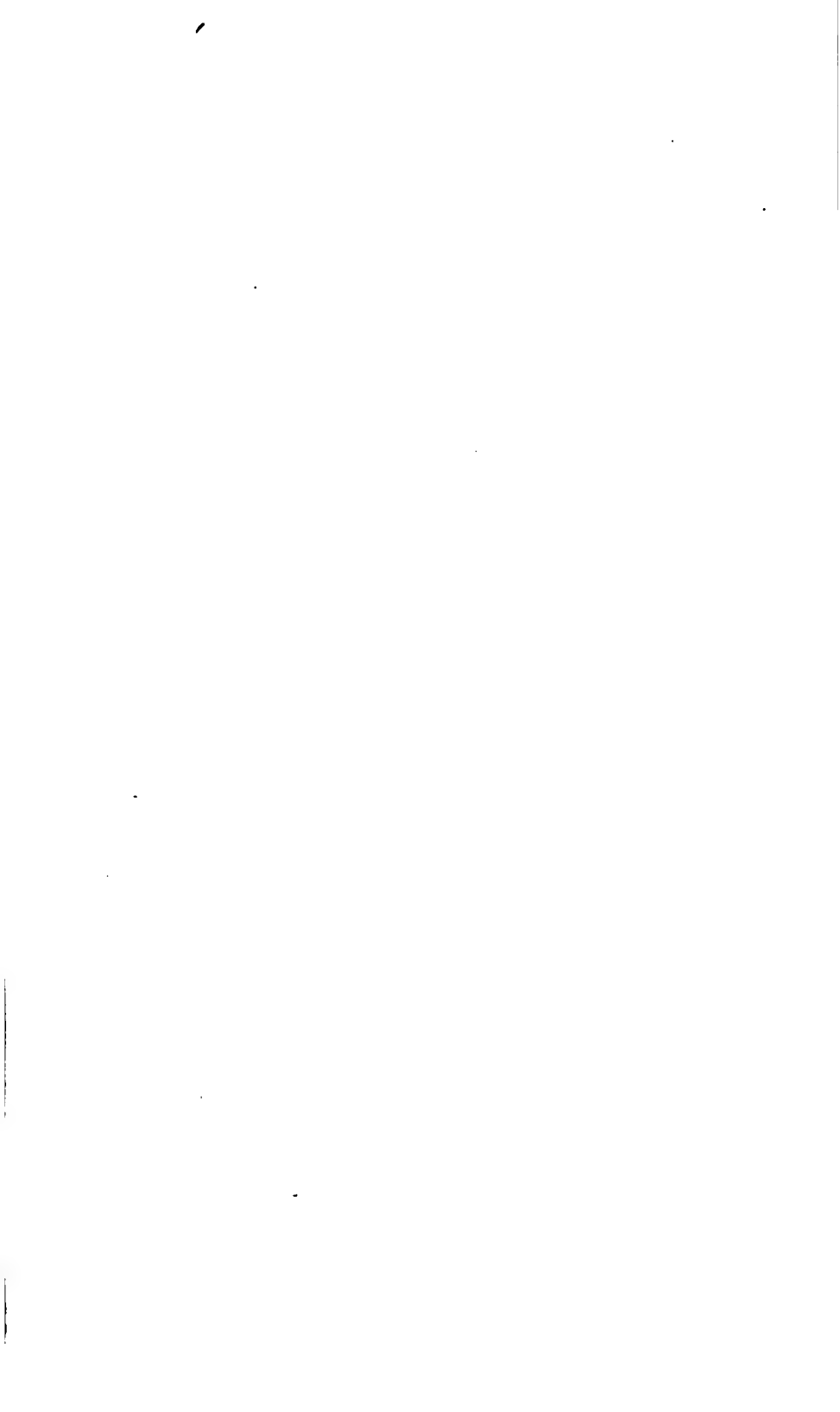
OR,

THE PUBLIC GOOD IS THE CHRISTIAN'S LIFE.

DIRECTIONS AND MOTIVES TO IT.

**INTENDED FOR AN AUDITORY OF LONDON CITIZENS;
AND PUBLISHED FOR THEM FOR WANT OF
LEAVE TO PREACH THEM.**

"Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify to himself a people zealous of good works."—TITUS ii. 14.



TO THE

TRULY CHRISTIAN MERCHANTS

AND

OTHER CITIZENS OF LONDON.

As my disease, and the restraint of rulers, seem to tell me that my pulpit work is at an end, so also my abode among you, or in this world, cannot be long. What work I have lived for, I have given the world more durable notice than transient words: it hath been such as men in power were against, and, it seems, will no longer endure. What doctrine it was that I last prepared for you, I thought meet to desire the press thus to tell you; not to vindicate myself, nor to characterize them who think that it deserves six months' imprisonment, but to be in your hands a provocation and direction; for that great work of a Christian life, sincerely done, will prepare you for that safety, joy, and glory, which London, England, or earth will not afford, and which men or devils cannot take from you. When, through the meritorious righteousness of Christ, your holy love and good works to him in his brethren shall make you the joyful objects of that sentence, "Come, ye blessed, inherit the kingdom," &c.; this is the life that need not be repented of, as spent in vain.

Dear friends, in this farewell, I return you my most hearty thanks for your extraordinary love and kindness to myself, much more for your love to Christ, and to his servants, who have more needed your relief. God is not unjust to forget your work and labor of love. You have visited those that others imprisoned, and fed those that others brought into want; and when some ceased not to preach for our affliction, it quenched not your impartial charity. It has been an unspeakable mercy unto me almost all my days, (when I received nothing from them,) to have known so great a number as I have

done, of serious, humble, holy, charitable Christians, in whom I saw that Christ hath an elect, peculiar people, quite different from the brutish, proud, hypocritical, malignant, unbelieving world! O, how sweet hath the familiarity of such been to me, whom the ignorant world hath hated! Most of them are gone to Christ; I am following: we leave you here to longer trial: it is like you have a bitter cup to drink; but be faithful to the death, and Christ will give you the crown of life. The word of God is not bound, and the Jerusalem above is free, where is the general assembly of the first-born, an innumerable company of angels, the spirits of the just made perfect, with Christ their glorified Head. The Lord guide, bless, and preserve you.

[1682.]

HOW TO DO GOOD TO MANY;

OR,

THE PUBLIC GOOD IS THE CHRISTIAN'S LIFE.

GAL. vi. 10.

AS WE HAVE, THEREFORE, OPPORTUNITY, LET US DO GOOD TO ALL MEN, ESPECIALLY UNTO THEM WHO ARE OF THE HOUSEHOLD OF FAITH.

Good is an epithet of the highest signification of any in human language. Some think the name of God is thence derived. Greatness and wisdom are equally his attributes, but goodness is the completion, and sweetness to the creature. Christ appropriateth it to God to be good, that is, essentially, primarily, and perfectly, and universally communicative: when it is said that God is love, the sense is the same, that he is the infinite, essential, and efficiently, and finally amiable, perfect good.

But though no one of his attributes in propriety and perfection are communicable, (else he that hath one part of the Deity must have all,) yet he imprinteth his similitude and image on his works; and the impress of his love and goodness is the chief part of his image on his saints: this is their very holiness; for this is the chief part of their likeness to God, and dedication to him: when the Spirit of sanctification is described in Scripture, as given upon believing, it signifieth, that our faithful perception of the redeeming, saving love of God in Christ is that means which the Spirit of Christ will bless, to the operating of the habit of holy love to God and man, which becomes a new and divine nature to the soul, and is sanctification itself, and the true principle of a holy, evangelical conversation. And as it is said of God, that he is good, and doth good, so every thing is inclined to work as it is: Christ tells us the good tree will bring forth good fruits, &c.; and we are God's workmanship created in Christ Jesus to good works, which God hath ordained, that we should walk in them; Eph. ii. 10.

Yet man doth not good as the sun shineth, by a full bent of natural necessitation, else the world would not be as it is; but as a free, undetermined agent, which hath need to be commanded by a law, and stirred up by manifold motives and exhortations; such as the Holy Ghost here useth in the text.

Where, 1. Doing good is the substance of the duty. 2. Men are the objects. 3. To all men is the extent. 4. Especially to them of the household of faith is the direction of precedency. 5. And while we have opportunity is the season, including a motive to make haste. So large and excellent a theme would require more than my allotted time to handle it fully; therefore I shall now confine myself to the duty extended—"Do good to all men."

Doct. To do good to all men, is all men's duty, to which every Christian especially must apply himself.

All men should do it: true Christians can do it, through grace, and must do it, and will do it. A good man is a common good; Christ's Spirit in them is not a dead or idle principle. It makes them in their several measures the salt of the earth, and the lights of the world; they are fruitful branches of the true vine. Every grace tendeth to well doing, and to the good of the whole body, for which each single member is made. Even hypocrites, as wooden legs, are serviceable to the body; but every living member much more, except some diseased ones, who may be more troublesome and dangerous than the wooden leg. It is a sign he is a branch cut off and withered, who careth little for any but himself. The malignant diabolist hateth the true and spiritual good; the ignorant know not good from evil; the erroneous take evil for good, and falsehood for truth; the slothful hypocrite wisheth much good, but doth but little; the formal, ceremonious hypocrite extols the name and image of goodness; the worldly hypocrite will do good if he can do it cheaply, without any loss or suffering to his flesh; the libertine hypocrite pleadeth Christ's merits against the necessity of doing good, and looketh to be saved because Christ is good, though he be barren and ungodly; and some ignorant teachers have taught them to say, when they can find no true faith, repentance, holiness, or obedience in themselves, that it is enough to believe that Christ believed and repented for them, and was holy and obedient for them. He was, indeed, holy and obedient for penitent believers; not to make holiness and obedience unnecessary to them, but to make them sincerely holy and obedient to himself, and to excuse them from the necessity of that perfect holiness and obedience here, which is necessary to those that will be justified by the law of works, or innocency. Thus all sorts of bad men have their oppositions to doing good; but to the sincere Christian

it is made as natural ; his heart is set upon it ; he is created, and redeemed, and sanctified for it, as the tree is made for fruit. He studieth it as the chief trade and business that he liveth for ; he waketh for it ; yea, he sleepeth, and eateth, and drinketh for it ; even to enable his body to serve his soul, in serving that Lord whose redeemed, peculiar people are all zealous of good works ; Tit. ii. 14. The measure of this zeal of doing good is the utmost of their power, with all their talents in desire and sincere endeavor ; the extent of the object is to all, (though not to all alike,) that is, to as many as they can.

But for order's sake we must here consider :—

I. Who this *all* meaneth, and in what order.

II. What is good ; and what is that good which we must do.

III. What qualifications he must have that will do good to many.

IV. What rules he must observe in doing it.

V. What works are they that must be done by him that would do good to many.

VI. What motives should quicken us to the practice.

VII. Some useful consecrations of the point.

I. It is God's prerogative to do good to all ; man's ability will not reach it. But our all is as many as we can do good to. 1. To men of all sorts, high and low, rich and poor, old and young, kindred, neighbors, strangers, friends, enemies, good, and bad ; none excepted that are within our power.

2. Not to a few only, but to as many persons of all sorts as we can ; as he that hath true grace would still have more for himself, so he that doth good would fain do more good ; and he that doth good to some would fain do good to many more. All good is progressive, and tendeth towards increase and perfection : why are the faithful said to love and long for the day of Christ's appearing, but because it is the great marriage day of the Lamb, when all the elect shall be perfect in our heavenly society ? And that makes it a more desirable day than that of our particular glorification at death. The perfection of the whole body addeth to the perfection of every part, for it is a state of felicity in perfect love ; and love maketh every man's good whom we love to be as sweet to us as our own ; yea, maketh it our own ; and then the perfection and glory of every saint will be our delight and glory ; and to see each single one's love united in one perfect joy and glory, will add to each person's joy and glory. And can you wonder if our little sparks of grace do tend towards the same diffused multiplication ; and if every member long for the completing of the body of Christ ? O, how much will this add to every faithful Christian's joy ! It will not be then a little flock ; not despised for singularity, nor hid in the crowd of impious sinners, nor dishonored by

infirmities, or paltry quarrels among ourselves, nor with the mixture of hypocrites; it will not be overvoted, or trod down, and persecuted by the power or number of the ignorant enemies. O Christians! go on in doing good to all men with cheerfulness, for it all tendeth to make up the body of Christ, and to prepare for that glorious state and day: every soul you convert, every brick that you lay in the building, tendeth to make up the house and city of God.

But as all motion and action is first upon the nearest object, so must ours; and doing good must be in order; first we must begin at home with our own souls and lives; and then to our nearest relations, and friends, and acquaintance, and neighbors; and then to our societies, church, and kingdom, and all the world. But mark that the order of execution, and the order of estimation and intention, differ. Though God set up lights so small as will serve but for one room, and though we must begin at home, we must far more esteem and desire the good of multitudes, of city, and church, and commonwealth; and must set no bounds to our endeavors, but what God and disability set.

II. But what is that good that we must do? Good is an attribute of being, and is its perfection, or well-being: God's goodness is perfection itself; and as he is the fountain of being, so also of goodness; and, therefore, his goodness is called love, whose highest act is his essential self-love, which is infinitely above his love to the world; but yet it is communicative love, which made all things good, and rested in seeing them all good. And as he is the fountain, so the same will or love is the measuring rule, and the end of all derived good. The prime notion of the creature's goodness is its conformity to the will of God; but the second is its perfection as its own, which, indeed, is but the same conformity.

Therefore, the true good which we must do men, is to make them conformable to the regulating will of God, that they may be happy in the pleased will of God; and to help them to all means for soul and body necessary hereunto; and this for as many as possibly we can.

III. The rules for judging and doing good are these:—1. That is the greatest good which is God's greatest interest; and his interest is his glory, and the complaisance of his fulfilled will.

2. Therefore, the good of the world, the church, of nations, of multitudes, is greater than the good of few.

3. The good of the soul is greater than of the body.

4. The avoiding the greatest evil is better than avoiding less.

5. Everlasting good is better than short.

6. Universal good, which leaveth no evil, is better than a particular good.

7. That is the best good, as to means, which most conduceth to the end.

8. There is no earthly good that is not mixed with some evil, nor any commodity that hath not some inconvenience or discommodity.

9. No sin must be done for any good.

10. Some things may be done for good which would be sin, were it not for the good which they are done for. It would be sin to give a robber your money, were it not to save your life, or some other commodity: it would be sin to do some things on the Lord's day, which necessity, or a greater good, may make a duty: your own defence may make it a duty to strike another, which else would be a sin.

11. In such cases there is need of great prudence and impartiality to know whether the good or the evil do preponderate; and a great part of the actions of our lives must be managed by that prudence, or else they will be sinful.

12. Therefore it is no small part of a minister's duty to counsel men, as a wise, skillful, and faithful casuist.

IV. To do good to many requireth many excellent qualifications: this is so far from being every one's performance, that we should be glad if a great part of mankind did not do more hurt than good.

1. He that will do his country good, must know what is good, and what is bad: a fool's love is hurtful: he knoweth not how to use it: he will love you to death, as an unskillful physician doth his most beloved patient; or love you into calamity, as amorous fondlings often do each other. This is the great enemy of human peace—men know not good from evil; like him that killed his son, thinking he had been a thief; or like routed soldiers, that run by mistake into the army of the enemy. Malignity and error make mad and doleful work in the world, and worst in those that should be wisest, and the greatest instruments of public good: the Scripture mistaketh not, which tells us of enemies and haters of God; and most of the world are professed adversaries to Christ: the Jews crucified him as an enemy to Cæsar, and to the safety of their law and country; and if we may judge by their enmity to holiness, the Spirit of Christ is taken for an intolerable enemy by no small part of nominal Christians: the laws of Christ are judged too strict: the hypocrites that bow to him, and hate his laws, do call them hypocrites that are but serious in the practice of Christianity, and hate them that have any more religion than compliments, ceremony, and set words: the image of a Christian and a minister is set up in militant opposition to them that are Christians and ministers indeed: if men that are called to the sacred office

would save souls in good earnest, and pull them out of the fire, and go any further than pomp and stage-work, they pass for the most insufferable men in the world: Elias is taken for the troubler of Israel, and Paul for a pestilent, seditious fellow, and the apostles as the offscouring of all things. Many a martyr hath died by fire, for seeking to save men from the fire of hell; and when the bedlamin world is at this pass, what good is to be expected from such men? When men, called Christians, hate and oppose the God, the Christ, the Holy Ghost, to whom they were vowed in baptism; when drunkenness, and whoredom, and perjury, and lying, and all debauchery, is taken to be more friendly and tolerable than the most serious worship of God, and obedience to his laws, and avoiding sin; in a word, when the greatest good is taken for unsufferable evil, you may know what good to expect from such.

They will all tell you that we must love God above all, and our neighbors as ourselves; but to fight against his word, and worship, and servants, is but an ill expression of their love to God; and seeking their destruction, because they will not sin, is an ill expression of love to their neighbors. When men judge of good and evil as Satan teacheth them, and as selfish pride and worldly interest incline them, what wonder if such love have murdered thirty thousand, or forty thousand, at once, in France, and two hundred thousand in Ireland, and have filled the Christian world with religious blood! Read but the doleful histories of church contentions for one thousand three hundred years, the stories of their wars and mutual persecutions, the streams of blood that have been shed in east and west, the inquisition, and bloody laws still kept up, and all this as good works, and done in love, and you would think that the sacred Roman hierarchy did believe that Christ hath put down the legal sacrificing of beasts, that he might, instead of it, have the blood of men; and that he who requireth his disciples to lay down their lives for him, would have a priesthood kept up to sacrifice their lives to him, that will not willfully break his laws. And all this is but as Christ foretold us, that his servants should be killed as a piece of service to God. No wonder if such men offer God a ludicrous, mimical sort of service, and worship him in vain, by heartless lip-labor, according to the traditions of men, when they dare sacrifice saints to the Lord of saints, and quiet their consciences by calling them such as they are themselves. But to the honor of goodness, and shame of sin, to show that they sin against the light of nature itself, they put the name of evil upon good before they dare openly oppose and persecute it; and they put the names of good upon evil before they dare defend and justify it.

But, alas! it is not only the ungodly that do mischief, thinking

venly that it is good. ~~How~~ many doth the church suffer by, while they prosecute their mistakes, who yet do much good in promoting the common truth which Christians are agreed in!

2. He that will do good to all or many, must have an unfeigned love to them. Hatred is mischievous, and neglect is unprofitable. Love is the natural fountain of beneficence. Love earnestly longeth to do good, and delighteth in doing it: it maketh many to be as one, and to be as ready to help others as each member of the body is to help the rest. Love maketh another's wants, sufferings, and sorrows, to be our own: and who is not willing to help himself? Love is a principle ready, active, ingenuous, and constant; it studieth to do good, and would still do more: it is patient with the infirmities of others, which men void of love do aggravate into odiousness, and make them their excuse for all their neglects, and their pretense for all their cruelties. Could you make all the slanderers, backbiters, revilers, despisers, persecutors, to love their neighbors as themselves, you may easily judge what would be the effect; and whether they would revile, or persecute, or imprison, or ruin themselves, or study how to make themselves odious, or suborn perjured witnesses against themselves.

3. Yea, he that will do good to many, must love many better than himself, and prefer the common good much before his own, and seek his own in the common welfare. He that loveth good, as good, will best love the best; and an honest old Roman would have called him an unworthy beast that preferred his estate or life before the common welfare. To be ready to do, suffer, or die, for their country, was a virtue which all extolled. A narrow-spirited, selfish man will serve others no further than it serveth himself, or, at least, will stand with his own safety or prosperity. He will turn as the weathercock, and be for them that are for his worldly interest. I confess that God oft useth such for common good: but it is by raising such storms as would sink them with the ship, and leaving them no great hope to escape by being false, or by permitting such villainies as threaten their own interest. A covetous father may be against gaming and prodigality in his children: the men of this world are wise in their generation: many that have abbey lands will be against Popery; and even atheists, and licentious men, may be loath to be slaves to politic priests, and to come under confession, and perhaps the inquisition; and those that have not sinned themselves into madness or gross delusions, will be loath to set up a foreign jurisdiction, and become the subjects of an unknown priest, if they can help it. God often useth vice against vice; and if no worldly, selfish men were the country's or the church's helpers, it must suffer, or trust to miracles.

But yet there is no trust to be put in these men further than

their own interest must stand or fall with the common good. If God, and heaven, and conscience, be not more powerful with a man than worldly interest, trust him not against the stream and tide, or when he thinks he can make a better bargain for himself. He that will sell heaven and Christ for the world, will sell you for it, and sell religion, truth, and honesty for it; and if he escape here the end of Ahithophel and Judas, he will venture on all that is out of sight. Christ was the grand benefactor to the world, and the most excellent teacher of love, and self-denial, and contempt of the world, to all that will follow him in doing good to many.

4. He that will do much good must be good himself. Make the tree good if you have good fruit. *Operari sequitur esse.* A bad man is an enemy to the greatest good that he should do. Malignity abhorreth serious piety; and will such promote it? If Elias be a man of miracles, he shall hear, "Hast thou found me, O my enemy!" And Micah shall hear, "I hate him, for he prophesieth not good of me, but evil: feed him with the bread and water of affliction."

And a bad man, if by accident he be engaged for a good cause, is still suspected by those that know him. They cannot trust him, as being a slave to lust, and to strong temptations, and a secret enemy to the true interest of his country. Alas! the best are hardly to be trusted far, as being liable to miscarry by infirmity; how little, then, is to be hoped for from the wicked!

4. He that will do much good in the world, must be furnished with considerable abilities, especially prudence and skill in knowing when, and to whom, and how to do it. Without this, he will do more harm than good. Even good men, when they have done much good, by some one miscarriage, tempted by the remnants of selfishness and pride, and by unskillful rashness, have undone all the good they did, and done as much hurt as wicked enemies. There goeth so much to public good, and so many snares are to be avoided, that rash, self-conceited, half-witted men do seldom do much, unless under the conduct of wiser men.

6. He that will be a public blessing to the world, must have a very large prospect, and see the state of all the world, and foresee what is like to come. He must not live as if his neighborhood were all the land, or his country or his party were all the church, or all the world: he must know what relation all our actions have to other nations, and to all the church of Christ on earth. The want of this universal prospect involveth many in censorious and dividing sects, who would abhor that way if they knew the case of all the church and world.

And we must not look only to a present exigent or advantage, but foresee how our actions will look hereafter, and what changes

may put them under other judgments, and what the fruits may be to posterity. Many things cause death which give the patient present ease.

7. He that will do good to many must have Christian fortitude, and not be discouraged with difficulties and opposition. He must serve God for the good of men with absolute resolution, and not with the hypocrite's reserves. He must be armed with patience against not only the malice of enemies, but the ingratitude of friends. The follies, the quarrels, the mutinies, and divisions, and often the abuses of that he would do good to, must not overcome him. He must imitate God, and do good to the evil, and bless those that curse him, and pray for them that spitefully use him. He must not promise himself more success than God hath promised him, nor yet despair and turn back discouraged; but conscience must carry him on to the end through all, whatever shall befall him.

8. Therefore he must look for his reward from God, and not expect too much from man. Men are insufficient, mutable, and uncertain: their interests and many accidents may change them. The multitude are of many minds and tempers; and if you please some, you shall displease others; and it is hard to please even one person long. Some great ones will not be pleased, unless you will prefer their wills before the will of God, your country's good, and your own salvation. The poor are so many and so indigent, that no man can answer their desires. If you give twenty pounds to twenty of the poor, forty or an hundred, that expected the like, will murmur at you, and be displeased. What man ever did so much good in the world as not to be accused by some, as if he were a covetous or a hurtful man?

Therefore, he that will do much good, must firmly believe the life to come, and must do that he doth as the work of God, in obedience to him, and look for his reward in heaven, and not as the hypocrite, in the praise of men, much less as the worldling, in the hope of temporal advantage. He must not wonder if he be rewarded as Socrates was at Athens, and as Christ and his apostles were in the world. Themistocles likened himself to a great fruit-tree, which men run for shelter under in a storm; and when the storm is over, they throw stones and cudgels at it, to beat down the fruit. Reckon not on a reward from men, but from God.

By what is said, you may perceive what are the great impediments of doing good to many, which must be overcome.

i. One, and the worst, is malignity, which is an enmity to spiritual good; for who will promote that which he is against?

ii. Another is unbelief of God's commands and promises, when

men take not themselves to be his subjects and stewards, nor can take his promise for good security for their reward.

iii. Another is the forementioned sin of selfishness, which makes a man's self to be his chiefest love and care, and more to him than Christ's interest, or the church or kingdom.

iv. Another is a false conceit that a man is so obliged to provide for his children and kindred, that all that he can get, how rich soever he be, must be left to make them rich, except some inconsiderable pittance.

v. Another is a great neglect of parents to prepare their children to be profitable to the commonwealth, but only to live in prosperity to themselves. 1. Children should be taught as much as may be to become persons of understanding, and such wisdom as may make them useful. 2. And especially to be truly religious; for then they will be devoted to do good, in love and obedience to God. 3. They should be taught what it is to be members of societies, and what duty they owe to church and state, and how great a part of their duty lieth in caring for the common good, and how sinful and damnable it is to live only to themselves, and how much this selfishness is the sum of all iniquity. 4. Those callings should be chosen for them which they are fittest for, and in which they may do most public good.

vi. And a timorous, cowardly disposition is a great hindrance to public good; for such will be still for the self-saving way, and afraid of the dangers that attend the greatest duties. If they are called to liberality, they will fear lest they should want themselves. In all costly or hazardous duty there will still be a lion in their way. They cannot trust God; and no wonder, then, if they are not to be trusted themselves.

vii. Lastly, sloth and idleness are constant enemies to well-doing. There are two sorts especially guilty of this; one, and the better, is some religious people, who think that their business is only with God and their own hearts, and that if they could spend all their time in meditation, prayer, and such like exercises, it would be the best kind of life on earth. Among the Papists, multitudes, by this conceit, turn friars and nuns. Among us, such spend all their time in hearing sermons, and in reading, and meditating, and prayer, and such like exercises of religion towards God, if they are but rich enough to live without bodily labor; and the example of Mary and Martha, they think, will make this good.

I know that this is no common error. The wicked are of a far different mind. And I know no man can do too much to save his soul; but we may do one sort of our work too much to the neglect of other parts. We have souls in flesh, and both parts have their

proper necessity and work. Mary did somewhat else than hear, though she wisely preferred it in its season. And no one is made for himself alone. You feel that religious exercises do you good; but what good is it that you do to others? I confess a monk's prayers for others is a good work. But God will have praying and endeavoring go together, both for yourselves and others. Bare praying God to relieve the poor, and to teach your children, and instruct the ignorant, will not excuse you from relieving, teaching, or instructing them. Yea, and your own good will best come in by your fullest obedience to God. Do what he bids you, and he will take care of your salvation. Your own way may seem best, but will not prove best: it will but cast you into melancholy and disability at last. "Six days shalt thou labor," is more than a permission. It is St. Paul's canon, "He that will not work, (if able,) let him not eat;" and it was King Solomon's mother who taught him the description of a virtuous woman, (Prov. xxv. 27.) "She eateth not the bread of idleness." God will have mercy and obedience as better than sacrifice. The sentence in judgment is upon doing to Christ in his members, (Matt. xxv.) when many that hear much, and prophesied, shall be cast out; Matt. vi. 21. Doing good is the surest way of receiving good. The duties of the first and second table must go together. He that is not zealous to do good, as well as to get good, hath not the peculiar nature of Christ's flock; (Titus ii. 14.) and zeal will be diligent, and not for sloth.

The other sort of the idle are rich, ungodly, worldly persons, who live as if God did give them plenty for nothing but to pamper their own flesh, and feed their own and others' sensuality. They think that persons of wealth and honor may lawfully spend their time in idleness, that is, in Sodom's sin, (Ezek. xvi. 49.) as if God expected least where he giveth most. How little conscience do many lords and ladies make of an idle hour, or life! When poor men's labor is such as tendeth to the common good, the rich, by luxury, sacrifice to the flesh the fruits of other men's endeavors; and instead of living in any profitable employment, devour that which thousands labor for.

It is not the toilsome drudgery of the vulgar which we take to be all rich folks' duty; but idleness and unprofitableness is a sin in the richest. Any of them may find good work enough that is fit for them, if they be willing. Children, and servants, and friends, and neighbors, and tenants, have souls and bodies which need their help. None can say, 'God found us no work to do,' or that God gave them more time or wealth than they had profitable use for. Little do they think what it will be, ere long, to reckon for all their time and estates, and to be judged according to their works:

and their own flesh often payeth dear for its ease and pleasure, by those pains and diseases which God hath suited to their sins ; and which usually shorten the lives which they no better use, or snatch them away from that time and wealth which they spent in preparing fuel for hell, and food for the worm that never dieth.

V. But what is it that a man should do that would do good to all or many ? There are some good works which are of far greater tendency than others, to the good of many : some of them I will name to you.

i. Do as much good as you are able to men's bodies, in order to the greater good of souls. If nature be not supported, men are not capable of other good. We pray for our daily bread before pardon and spiritual blessings, not as if it were better, but that nature is supposed before grace ; and we cannot be Christians if we be not men. God hath so placed the soul in the body, that good or evil shall make its entrance by the bodily senses to the soul. This way God himself conveyeth many of his blessings, and this way he inflicteth his corrections : ministers that are able and willing to be liberal, find, by great experience, that kindness and bounty to men's bodies openeth the ear to counsel, and maketh them willing to hear instruction : those in France, that are now trying men's religion in the market, and are at work with money in one hand, and a sword in the other, do understand this to be true. All men are sensible of pain or pleasure, good or evil, to the flesh, before they are sensible what is necessary for their souls. You must therefore speak on that side which can hear, and work upon the feeling part, if you will do good.

Besides this, your charity may remove many great impediments and temptations. It is no easy thing to keep heavenly thoughts upon your mind, and especially to delight in God, and keep the relish of his law upon your hearts, while pinching wants are calling away your mind, and disturbing it with troublesome passions. To suffer some hunger, and go in vile apparel, is not very difficult ; but when there is a family to provide for, a discontented wife and children to satisfy, rents, and debts and demands unpaid, it must be an excellent Christian than can live contentedly, and cast all his useless care on God, and keep up the sense of his love, and a delight in all his service. Do your best to save the poor from such temptations, as you would yourselves be saved from them.

And when you give to the poor that are ignorant and ungodly, give them after it some counsel for their souls, or some good book which is suited to their cases.

ii. If you would do good to many, set yourselves to promote the practical knowledge of the great truths necessary to salvation.

1. Goodness will never be enjoyed or practiced without knowl-

edge. Ignorance is darkness, the state of his kingdom who is the prince of darkness, who by the works of darkness leadeth the blind world to utter darkness ; God is the Father of lights, and giveth wisdom to them that ask and seek it ; he sent his Son to be the light of the world ; his word and ministers are subordinate light ; his servants are all the children of light ; ignorance is virtually error, and error the cause of sin and misery. And men are not born wise, but must be made wise by skillful, diligent teaching : parents should begin it, ministers should second them ; but, alas ! how many millions are neglected by both ! and how many neglect themselves, when ministers have done their best ! Ignorance and error are the common road to wickedness, misery, and hell.

2. But what can any others do for such ? Two things I will remember you of ; 1. Set up such schools as shall teach children to read the Scriptures, and learn the catechism, or principles of religion. Our departed friend, Mr. Thomas Gouge, did set us an excellent pattern for Wales. I think we have grammar schools enough. It is not the knowledge of tongues, and arts, and curious sciences, which the common people want, but the right understanding of their baptismal covenant with God, and of the Creed, Lord's Prayer, Decalogue, and Church Communion. A poor, honest man, or a good woman, will teach children thus much for a small stipend, better than they are taught it in most grammar schools ; and I would none went to the universities without the sound understanding of the catechism ; yea, I would none came thence, or into the pulpit, without it.

2. When you have got them to read, give them good books, especially Bibles, and good catechisms, and small practical books, which press the fundamentals on their consciences. Such books are good catechisms : many learn the words of the Creed, Lord's Prayer, Commandments, and Catechism, by rote, and never understand them ; when a lively book, that awakeneth their consciences, bringeth them to sensible consideration, and to a true understanding of the same things which before they could repeat without sense or savor. It is the catechistical truths which most of our English sermons press ; and the lively pressing them maketh them pierce deeper than a catechism.

If men that in life, or at death, give a stated revenue for good works, would settle the one half on a catechising English school, and the other half on some suitable good books, it might prove a very great means of public reformation. When a good book is in the house, if some despise it, others may read it ; and when one parish is provided, every year's rent may extend the charity to

other parishes ; and it may spread over a whole county in a little time. Most of the good that God hath done for me, for knowledge or conscience, hath been by sound and pious books.

iii. A great means of public good is the right ordering of families all the week, but especially on the Lord's day. Though the ministry be the usual means of converting heathens and infidels, Christian education by parents is the first means appointed by God for the holy principling of youth : parents must teach them with unwearied diligence, lying down and rising up ; Deut. vi. 11. And they that will expect God's blessings must use his appointed means. Nature teacheth men and brutes to provide for their offspring with diligence and patience ; and as grace teacheth believers to expect far greater things, for themselves and their children, than this world affordeth, so it obligeth them to be at so much greater diligence to obtain it. An everlasting kingdom deserveth more labor than a trade or full estate for the flesh. If all parents did their parts to make their children sanctified believers, as well as they expect the schoolmaster should do his part to make them scholars, and the master do his part to teach them their trades, we might hope that ministers would find them fitter for church work, and that godliness would not be so rare, nor so many wicked children break their parents' hearts. But of this I have spoken lately in my 'Counsel to Young Men.'

Religion is never like to prosper if it be not made a family work. If it be there made the business of the house, and done with reverent seriousness and constancy, if magistracy and ministry should fail, yet families would propagate and preserve it. Begin with a reverent begging the help and blessing of God ; then read his word, and call upon his name ; speak serious words of counsel to inferiors ; spend the Lord's day, as much as may be, in public worship, and the rest in reading godly books, and in singing God's praise, and calling on his name ; put suitable books into the hands of servants and children to read when they have leisure ; encourage them in it with love and rewards ; and keep out of the way of temptation ; and then God's blessing will dwell in your families, and they will be as churches of God. If any complain of negligent ministers, or persecuting magistrates, and will not do their own family duties, which none forbid, they condemn themselves.

iv. If you would be public blessings, and do good to many, do your best to procure a skillful, faithful ministry in the church.

1. Send no son to the university who doth not first show these three qualifications : a capable, natural wit and utterance ; a love to serious, practical religion ; a great desire to serve God in the ministry, though it should be in suffering from men. If they want any

one of these, design them to some other calling ; devote not an indisposed lad to the ministry, in hope that God will make him better, but stay till he is better.

2. Seeing pastors are here obtruded upon the flock, it is a work of great importance for religious gentlemen to buy as many advowsons or presentations as they can, that they may introduce the best that they can get.

God hath hitherto made use of the qualifications of the ministers as the special means for the welfare of his church. The bare title and office is so far from sufficing, without the skill and fidelity of the persons, that such have been the great corrupters and disturbers of the church. When pious men have heaped up riches and honors upon the clergy, these have been baits for the worst men to become seekers, and make the sacred ministry but a trade for wealth : and if carnal, worldly men be ministers, alas ! what plagues may they be to the people and themselves ! They will hate the spiritual practice of doctrine which they preach. When they have told men of a heaven and hell, and the necessity of a holy heart and life, as if they had been in jest, they will take those for hypocrites that believe them, and live accordingly. They will take the best of the flock for their enemies, because they are enemies to their hypocrisy and vice. Instead of imitating St. Paul, (Acts xx.) who taught them publicly, and from house to house, day and night, with tears, they will turn the ministry into compliment and formality, and think, by saying a cold, unskillful sermon, and by rotting over a few heartless words, they have laudably performed their part. They will take those for their best hearers who will most honor them, and best pay them, though ever so ignorant and ungodly ; and their spleen will swell against the best and most religious people, because they dislike their unfaithful lives and ministrations. If religion should be in public danger, these will be the Judases that will sell it for gain. They will do any thing rather than suffer much. They are ministers of the world, and not of Christ ; readier to make crosses for others than to bear the cross of Christ ; for it is gain that is their godliness ; and when their treachery is seen and hated, they will hate the haters of it ; and the studies of malignant men will be their laboratories, and the pulpits the place where the sublimate and essence of malice must be vended. How effectually will Satan's work be done when it is performed in the formalities of the sacred ministry, and in the name of Christ ! O, what hath the church suffered by a worldly, graceless ministry these thousand years, and more ! and what doth it yet suffer by them in the east and west !

But, on the other side, a skillful, faithful minister will preach sound doctrine, and worship God with serious devotion, and live

to Christ and the church's good. He will speak the word of truth and life with truth and liveliness, as one that believeth what he saith, and feeleth the power of it on his heart. Though he must have food and raiment as other men, it is the saving and edifying of souls which is his work, to which he bendeth all his studies, for which he prayeth and longeth, and in which he rejoiceth, and to which all his worldly interest not only giveth place, but is made to serve. He will think no price, no pains or suffering too dear, so that the souls of men be saved: this is the riches and preferment which he desireth. He hath nothing too good or too dear for Christ, or for the meaneest of his servants, when Christ requireth it. He is willing to spend and be spent for their sakes. It is their, and not theirs, that he desireth. He feareth the unbelief and hard-heartedness of his hearers, and lest they should reject their own salvation, more than all the slanders or persecutions of their enemies. In a word, his heart, his study, his life, and business, is to do all the good he can; and they that under such a ministry remain impenitent, and hardened in sin, are the most hopeless, miserable people in the world.

v. And it greatly conduceth to public good to keep up true order and Christian discipline in the particular churches. Though Popish church tyrants have turned the church keys into a military, reigning, or revenging sword, yet Christ did not in vain commit them into his ministers' hands. Religion seldom prospereth well where the church is no enclosure, but a common, where all sorts, undistinguished, meet; where, as the people know not who shall be made their pastors, but must trust their souls to the care of any that a patron chooseth, so the pastor knoweth not who are his communicating flock until he see them come to the Lord's table, no, nor when he seeth them; when it goeth for a sufficient excuse to the pastors if the rabble of wicked men communicate, or pass for his church members, though they communicate not, if he can but say, I knew them not to be wicked, (and how should he, when he knew them not at all?) and that none accused them, when they are mere strangers to each other. In Christ Jesus, neither circumcision nor uncircumcision availeth any thing, but a new creature, and faith that worketh by love. And if Christ made his servants no better than the world, who would believe that he is the Savior of the world? There will be some tares in Christ's field till his judgment cast them out forever. But if it be not a society professing holiness and disowning unholiness, and making a difference between the clean and the unclean, him that sweareth and him that feareth an oath, him that serveth God and him that serveth him not, Christ will disown them as workers of iniquity, though they had ate and drank with him, and done

miracles in his name; Matt. vii. Much more if it be a society where godliness is despised, and the most godly excommunicated, if they differ but in a formality of ceremony from Diotrephes, and the wicked rabble tolerated and cherished in reviling serious godliness, on pretense of opposing such dissenters. Christ will not own that pastor nor society which owneth not conscience and serious piety.

If the pastors set up their wills and traditions before the laws and will of Christ, and call out, 'Who is on our side?' instead of 'Who is on Christ's side?' and fall out with the sheep, and worry and scatter them, and cherish the goats, and tolerate the wolves, woe to those shepherds, when Christ shall judge them! I wonder not if such incline to infidelity, though they live by the name and image of Christianity, and if they be loath to believe that there will be such a day of judgment which they have so much cause to fear.

But the prudent, loving guidance of faithful pastors is so necessary to the church, that without it there will be envy and strife, confusion, and every evil work; and a headless multitude, though otherwise well-meaning, pious people, will be all wise, and all teachers, till they have no wise teachers left, and will crumble all into dissolution, or into shameful sects. St. Paul told us of two games that Satan hath to play, (Acts xx.) one by grievous wolves, that shall devour the flock, (though in sheep's clothing, yet known by their bloody jaws,) the other by men from among yourselves, who shall speak perverse things, to draw disciples after them.

vi. If you would promote the good of all or many, promote the love and concord of all that deserve to be called Christians.

To which end you must, 1. Know who those are; and, 2. Skillfully and faithfully endeavor it.

1. Far be it from any Christian to think that Christ hath not so much as told us what Christianity is, and who they be that we must take for Christians, when he hath commanded them all so earnestly to love each other. Is not baptism our christening? Every one that hath entered into that covenant with Christ, and understandingly and seriously professeth to stand to it, and is not proved by inconsistent words or deeds to nullify that profession, is to be taken for a Christian, and used in love and communion as such.

Consider of these words, and consider whether all churches have walked by this rule, and whether swerving from it have not been the cause of corruption and confusion.

He is a Christian fit for our communion, who is baptized in infancy, and owneth it solemnly at age; and so is he that was not baptized till he himself believed.

He is a Christian that believeth Christ to be true God and true

man in one person, and trusteth him as our only Redeemer, by his merits and passions, and our Mediator in the heavens; and obeyeth him as our sovereign Lord, for pardon, for his Spirit, and for salvation. And as a Christian this man is to be loved and used, though he have not so much skill in metaphysics as to know whether it be a proper speech to call Mary the mother of God, or that one of the Trinity was crucified; or to know in what sense Christ's natures might be called one or two; and in what sense he might be said to have one will or two wills—one operation or two; and know not whether the *tria capitula* were to be condemned; yea, though he could not define, or clearly tell, what *hypostasis persona*, yea, or *substantia*, signifieth in God; nor tell whether God of gods be a proper speech.

This man is a Christian, though he know not whether patriarchal, and metropolitical, and diocesan church forms, be according to the will of Christ, or against it; and whether symbolical signs, in the worship of God, may lawfully be devised and imposed by men; and whether some doubtful words, in oaths and subscriptions of men's imposing, being unnecessary, be lawful; and how far he may, by them, incur the guilt of perjury, or deliberate lying; and though he think that a minister may preach and pray in fit words of his own, though he read not a sermon or prayer written for him by others, who think that no words but theirs should be offered to God or man.

2. If Christ's description of a Christian be forsaken, and mere Christianity seem not a sufficient qualification for our love and concord, men will never know where to rest, nor ever agree in any one's determination but Christ's. All men that can get power will be making their own wills the rule and law, and others will not think of them as they do; and the variety of fallible, mutable church laws, and terms of concord, will be the engine of perpetual discord, as Ulpian told honest Alexander Severus the laws would be, which he thought to have made for sober concord, in fashions of apparel. Those that are united to Christ by faith, and have his sanctifying Spirit, and are justified by him, and shall dwell with him in heaven, are certainly Christians; and such as Christ hath commanded us to love as ourselves. And seeing that it is his livery by which his disciples must be known, by loving one another, and the false prophets must be known by the fruits of their hurtfulness, as wolves, thorns, and thistles, I must profess (though order and government have been so amiable to me as to tempt me to favorable thoughts of some Roman power in the church) I am utterly irreconcilable to it, when I see that the very complexion of that hierarchy is malice and bloodiness against men most seriously and humbly pious, that dare not obey them in their

sinful usurpations, and that their cause is maintained by belying, hating, and murdering true Christians.

And, on the other side, too many make laws of love and communion to themselves, and confine Christ's church within their little various, and perhaps erroneous, sects; and all others they love with pity; but only those of their cabin and singular opinions they love with complacency and communion: those that condemn such as Christ justifieth, and say that Christians are not his, are near of kin to one another, though one sort show it by persecution, and the other but by excommunication, or schismatical separation. "We are all one in Christ Jesus;" Gal. iv. 26. And, therefore, I advise all Christians to hate the causes and ways of hatred, and love all the causes and means of love. Frown on them that so extol their singular sentiments as to backbite others, and speak evil of what they understand not; especially such as the pamphleteers of this age, whose design is weekly and daily to fight against Christian love, and to stir up all men, to the utmost of their power, to think odiously of one another, and plainly to stir up a thirst after blood: never did Satan write by the hand of man if he do it not by such as these: the Lord of love and mercy rebuke them.

And take heed of them that can find enough in the best that are against their way to prove them dishonest, if not intolerable; and can see the mote of a ceremony, or nonconformity to a ceremony, in their brother's eye, and not the beam of malice, or cruelty, in their own. Take heed of those that are either for confounding toleration of all, or for dissipating cruelty on pretense of unity.

That land, or church, shall never truly prosper where these three sorts are not well distinguished: 1. The approved, that are to be encouraged. 2. The tolerable, that are to be patiently and lovingly endured. 3. The intolerable, that are to be restrained. They may as well confound men and beasts, wise men and mad men, adults and infants, as confound these three sorts, in reference to religion.

I add this note to prevent objections, that though meekness and gentleness promote peace; yet to speak sharply and hatefully of hatred, unpeaceableness, and cruelty, and all that tends to destroy love, is an act of love, and not of an uncharitable, unpeaceable man.

vii. If you love the common good of England, do your best to keep up sound, serious religion in the public parish churches, and be not guilty of any thing that shall bring the chief interest of religion into private assemblies of men only tolerated, if you can avoid it.

Indeed, in a time of plagues, and epidemical infection, tolerated churches may be the best preservatives of religion, as it was the

first 300 years, and in the Arians' reign, and under Popery ; but where sound and serious religion is owned by the magistrate, tolerated churches are but as hospitals for the sick, and must not be the receptacle of all the healthful. And, doubtless, if the Papists can but get the Protestant interest once into prohibited or tolerated conventicles, (as they will call them,) they have more than half overcome it, and will not doubt to use it next as they do in France, and by one turn more to cast it out. The countenance of authority will go far with the vulgar against all the scruples that men of conscience stick at, and they will mostly go to the allowed churches, whoever is there. Let us, therefore, lose no possession that we can justly get, nor be guilty of disgracing the honest conformists, but do all we can to keep up their reputation for the good of souls. They see not matters of difference through the same glass that we do : they think us unwarrantably scrupulous. We think the matter of their sin to be very great ; but we know that before God the degree of guilt is much according to the degree of men's negligence or unwillingness to know the truth, or to obey it ; and prejudice, education, and converse, make great difference on men's apprehensions. Charity must not reconcile us to sin ; but there is no end of uncharitable censuring each other.

It hath made me admire to hear some men's words against comprehension, as they call it ; that they would not have rulers revoke that which they judge to be heinous sin in their impositions, unless they will revoke all that they think unlawful, lest it should strengthen the parish churches, and weaken the tolerated or suffering part. I will not here open the sin of this policy as it deserves ; but I wish them to read a small book called 'The Whole Duty of Nations,' said to be Mr. Thomas Beverley's.

viii. If you love the common good, take heed lest any injuries tempt you into sedition or unlawful wars : no man, that never tried them, can easily believe what enemies wars and tumults are to religion, and to common honesty and sobriety. Men are there so serious about their lives and bodily safety that they have no room or time for serious worshipping of God : the Lord's day is by necessity made a common day ; and all men's goods are almost common to the will of the soldiers : either power seems to authorize them, or necessity to allow them to use the goods of others as their own, as if they were incapable of doing wrong : it is their honor that can kill most ; and how little place there is for love it is easy to conceive.

I doubt not but it is lawful to fight for our king or country in a good cause. As nature giveth all private men a right of private self-defence, and no more, so the same law of nature, which is God's law, giveth all nations a right of public self-defence against

its public enemies ; that is, against any that, by his religion, or his own profession, bindeth himself to destroy that nation if he can, or by open arms seeketh no less than their destruction : but as few calamities are worse to a land than war, so much is to be endured to prevent it. It is like a red-hot iron which fools lay hold on, thinking it is gold, till it fetch off skin and flesh to the bones, and perhaps set the house on fire. If your cause be bad, God will not be for you ; and he that so taketh the sword shall perish with the sword ; and if you bite and devour one another, you shall be devoured one of another. And, alas ! thousands of the innocent usually perish, or are ruined in the flames that furious men do kindle ; no doubt as suffering in prison, so venturing in war, is a duty, when God calls you to it ; but in itself a prison is a far more desirable sort of suffering than a war. Therefore, between the danger of the miseries of an unlawful war, and the danger of betraying our king or kingdom, for want of necessary defence, how cautelous should all sober Christians be !

ix. If you would promote the common good, do your best to procure wise and faithful rulers.

Quest. What can private men do in this ?

Ans. 1. In cases where they have choosing voices, they ought to prefer the best with greater resolution, and, not for slothfulness, to omit their part, nor, for worldly interest or the fear of men, betray their country, as ever they would escape the punishment of the perfidious. Woe to that Judas that sells his country and conscience for any bribe, or by self-saving fear !

2. In other cases, where you have no choosing, vote with men, you have a praying voice with God : pray for kings, and all in authority, that we may live a quiet and peaceable life, in all godliness and honesty. God hath commanded no duty in vain : do it earnestly and constantly, and hope for a good issue from God : do it not selfishly, that you may have prosperity or preferment by them, but sincerely, for their own and the common good. God is the fountain of power, the absolute Sovereign of all the world ; men are but his provincial officers ; none claimeth an universal government of the world but one that pretendeth to be Christ's vicar-general ; and none believe his claim but blinded men. There is no power but of and under God, who hath made rulers his ministers for our good, to be a praise to them that do well, and a terror to evil doers ; that they that will not be moved with the hopes of God's future rewards, and the fears of his punishments, may be moved by that which is near them within the reach of sense. And all men regard their bodies, though only believers are ruled by the everlasting interest of their souls.

Therefore, pray hard for kings and magistrates ; for if they be

good they are exceeding great blessings to the world. They will remember that their power is for God, and the common good, and that to God they must give a strict account: they will take God's law for the only universal law to the world, and conform their own as by-laws to it. They will take their own interest to consist in pleasing God, and promoting the gospel and kingdom of Christ, and the piety and saving of men's souls. They will be examples of serious godliness, of justice and sobriety, trustiness, and temperance, and chastity, to their subjects: in their eyes a vile person will be condemned, but they will honor those that fear the Lord; Psalm xv. 4. They will love those most that love Christ best, and most diligently obey him, and tenderly fear to sin against him: those please them best that please God best, and are most useful to the common good: they will set their hearts on the people's welfare, and are watching for all, while all securely live under their vigilancy. They will cherish all that Christ cherisheth, and especially the faithful pastors of the churches, that seek not the world, but the welfare of the flocks: when some are saying, 'In this mountain we must worship God,' and some, 'at Jerusalem,' they will teach them all to worship God in spirit and truth. When pastors and people grow peevish and quarrelsome for their several interests, opinions, and wills, a Constantine will cast all their libels into the fire, and rebuke the unpeaceable, and restrain the violent, and teach them to forgive and love each other, and will be the great justice of peace to all the churches in the land, and pare their nails that would tear and scratch their brethren: he will countenance the sound and peaceable, and tolerate all the tolerable, but will tie the hands of strikers, and the tongues of revilers; he will contrive the healing of exasperated minds, and take away the occasions of division, and rebuke them that call for fire from heaven, or for the sword, to do that which belongeth to the word, or to execute their pride and wrath. Godliness will have all the encouragement they can give it, and innocence a full defence: malignity, and persecution, and perjury, and unpeaceable revenge, will be hateful where they rule; and they had rather men feared sin too much than too little; and would have all men prefer the law and honor of God to theirs. Where the righteous bear rule, the people rejoice; the wisdom, piety, and impartiality of their governors suppresseth profaneness, oppression and contention, and keepeth men in the way of love and peace; and as the welfare of all is the care of such a ruler above his own pleasure, wealth or will, so he will have the hearts, and hands, and wealth of all with readiness to serve him. No wonder if such are called nursing fathers, and the light of our eyes, and the breath of our nostrils, and the shadow of a rock in a weary land. As they bear the im-

age of God's supereminency, and doubly honor him, they are doubly honored by him; so that the names of pious princes show not only the sense of mankind, but the special providence of God in making the memory of the just to be blessed; and as they could not endure to see in their days ungodliness triumph, or serious godliness made a scorn, or conscience and fear of sinning made a disgrace, or the gospel hindered, and faithful ministers forbid to preach it, so God will not suffer their consciences to want the sense of his love, nor their departing souls to fail of their everlasting hopes, nor their memories to be clouded by obscurity or reproach. Even among heathens, what a name have those emperors left behind them who lived in justice, charity, and all virtue, and wholly studied the good of all! What a wonder is it that M. Antonine should be so extolled by so many writers, and not one of them all, as I remember, speak one word of evil of him, save that a small, short persecution of the Christians was made in his time, till he restrained it! And all the people almost deified him, and would have perpetuated his line and name in the throne, but that the horrid wickedness of his posterity forced them to a change. What a name hath excellent Alexander Severus left behind him! And what a blessing have wise, and godly, and peace-making Christian princes been in divers ages to the world!

And both the inferior magistrates and the clergy usually much conform themselves, at least in outward behavior, to their example; for they will choose men of wisdom, conscience, and justice, under them, to judge and govern. The bishops and pastors which they choose, will be able, godly, laborious men; not seekers of worldly wealth and honor, nor envious silencers of faithful preachers, nor jealous hinderers of religious duties, nor flattering men-pleasers, nor such as lord it over God's heritage; but such as rule not by constraint, but willingly, as examples of love and piety to the flock. Pray hard, therefore, for kings and all in authority, and honor all such as unspeakable blessings for the good of all.

But, on the contrary, wicked rulers will be Satan's captains, against Jesus Christ, and men's sanctification and salvation. They will be wolves in the place of shepherds, and will study to destroy the best of the people, and to root out all serious godliness and justice. Conscience, and fearing sin, will be to them a suspected, yea, a hated thing. If any abuse it, it serves them for a pretense against it. They take the people's welfare and their own interest to be enemies, and presently look on those, whom they should rule and cherish, as the adversaries whom they must tread down. They will purposely make edicts and laws that are contrary to God's law, that they may have advantage to persecute the faithful, and to destroy them as disobedient. They will study to

conquer conscience and obedience to God, lest his authority should be regarded above theirs; and Christ is used by them as if he were an usurper, and not their Sovereign, but were again to be taken for an enemy to Cæsar; and their hatred to true ministers will be such as Paul's accusers intimate, who said, "He preached another king, one Jesus." Wicked rulers will be the capital enemies to all that will be enemies to wickedness, and resolved to please God and save their souls. They will not be obeyed under God, but before him, nor served by the faithful servants of Christ, nor pleased but at the rate of men's damnation, by displeasing God. All men love their like. The worst men, if flatterers, will seem the best to them, and the best the worst and most intolerable; and church and state is like to be written by their copy. O, what dreadful plagues have wicked rulers been to the world, and what a dismal case do they continue the earth in to this day! Not but that people, and especially priests, do contribute hereto, but the chief authors are men in greatest power. Five parts of six of the world at this day are heathens and infidels. And what's the cause? Rulers will not suffer the gospel to be preached to them. The eastern Christians were all torn in pieces by the wickedness and contention of the governors of the state and church, banishing and murdering one another, so that, when the Turks invaded them, the promise of liberty to exercise their religion tempted them to make the less resistance, thinking they could not be much worse than before. But the vulgar are so apt to follow the rulers, that, ever since, the most of the easterns are apostatized from Christ, and turned to Mahometanism; though in those countries where the Turk alloweth the Christian people to have governors of their own, religion somewhat prospereth, yet where that privilege is denied them, and Turks only are their rulers, it withereth away, and comes to almost nothing.

And what keepeth out reformation, that is, the primitive, simple Christianity, from the Popish countries that have religion corrupted by human superfluities, but the seduction of priests, and tyranny of rulers, that will not endure the preaching of the gospel, and the opening of the Scriptures to the people in a known tongue? How much holy blood have Roman and Spanish inquisitors, and French and Irish murderers, and most other Popish rulers, to answer for? Even Walsh, the Papist, in his Irish history, tells us all, out of Ketin and others, how commonly, for ages, they lived there in the sin of bloody wars, and murders, yea, even when they professed great holiness. Wicked rulers are as the pikes in the pond, which live by devouring all about them. It is Satan's main design in the world to corrupt God's two great ordinances of magistracy and ministry, and turn them both against Christ's kingdom, and to de-

stroy Christians in Christ's name. O, therefore, pray hard that all Christian nations may have good rulers, and be very thankful to God for such.

x. And if you would be instruments of public good, know what are public sins and dangers, that you may do your part against them, and join not with any that will promise never to endeavor any reforming alteration. The chiefest are ignorance, pride, and self-willedness in teachers and people, malignant enmity to goodness, impatience with the infirmities of good men, judging of persons and things by self-interest, covetousness, sensuality, and taking Christianity but as the religion of the land, without diligent study to be rooted in the truth. And the scandals of hypocrites and tempted Christians hardening the enemies, especially by divisions, and public temerities, and miscarriages, is not the least.

xi. I would also, in order to public good, persuade serious Christians to be more zealous in communication with their neighbors, and live not overstrangely to others, and say not, as Cain, "Am I my brother's keeper?" Be kind and loving to all about you, and live not as unknown men to them; nor alienate them by sourness, contempt, or needless singularity, but become all things lawful to all men, to save some: lend them good books, and draw them to hear God's faithful ministers: persuade them to pray in their families, even with a form or book, till they need it not.

xii. Lastly, if you would do good, be such as you would have others be, and teach them by examples of piety, charity, patience, self-denial, forbearing, and forgiving, and not by mere words contradicted by your lives. These are the materials by which you must do good to all.

VI. What now remaineth but that we all set ourselves to such a fruitful course of life? I greatly rejoice in the grace of God, which I daily see in many such of my familiar acquaintance, who study to do good to all, and to live in love, and peace, and holiness, by example, and by self-denial, and constant charity, using Christ's talents to their Master's ends, for the temporal and eternal good of many. But, alas! too many live as if it were enough to do no harm, and say, as the slothful servant, "Here is thy talent which I hid."

And some there be that, in a blind jealousy of the doctrine of justification, (not understanding what the word justification signifieth,) cry down even the words of James, as if they were irreconcilable with Paul's, and can scarce bear him that saith, as Christ, (Matt. xii.) "By thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned;" as if they had never read,

"Well done, good and faithful servant," &c.; "For I was hungry and ye fed me," &c.; nor (Heb. v. 9,) "He is the author of eternal salvation to all them that obey him;" or (Heb. xiii.) "With such sacrifice God is well pleased;" or "He that doeth righteousness is righteous;" or "That we shall be judged according to our works;" or (Rev. xxii. 14.) "Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in by the gates into the city;" or (Gal. vi. 7, 8.) "What a man soweth, that shall he reap. He that soweth to the Spirit, of the Spirit shall reap everlasting life;" with many such.

No man well in his wits can think that any thing we do can merit of God in commutative justice, as if he received any thing from us. This were even to deny God to be God. But are we not under a law of grace, and doth not that law command us obedience, and the improvement of our talents in doing good? And shall we not be judged by that law? And what is judging, but justifying or condemning? No works of ours can stand the trial by the law of innocency or works, but only the perfect righteousness of Christ. But he that is accused of final impenitency, infidelity, hypocrisy, or unholiness, if truly accused, shall never be justified, and if falsely, must be justified against that charge by somewhat besides what is done out of him by Jesus Christ.

It is an easier thing to be zealous for an opinion, which is sound, or supposed such, about works and grace, than to be zealous of good works, or zealously desirous of grace. How sad use did Satan make of men's zeal for orthodox words, when the Nestorian, Eutychian, and Monothelite controversies were in agitation! He went for a hollow-hearted neuter, that did not hereticate one side or other. And I would that factious, ignorant zeal were not still alive in the churches. How many have we heard on one side reviling Lutherans, Calvinists, Arminians, Episcopalians, Presbyterians, Independents, &c., to render them odious, that never understand the true state of the difference! And how fiercely do some Papists and others cry down Solidians, and persuade men that we are enemies to good works, or think that they are not necessary to salvation, (because some rashly maintained that, in a faction against George Major, long ago,) or at least that they are no further necessary, but as signs to prove that which God knoweth without them! And on the other side, how many make themselves and others believe that the true expositors of Saint James's words are almost Papists, and teach men dangerously to trust to works for their justification, while they understand not what either of the apostles mean by justification, faith, or works! Many so carefully avoid trusting to good works, that they have none or few to trust

to. No doubt, nothing of man must be trusted to for the least part that belongs to Christ, but all duty and means must be both used and trusted for its own part.

Consider well these following motives, and you will see why all Christians must be zealous of doing all the good they can.

1. It rendereth a man likest to God to be good, and to do good; on which account Christ requireth it even towards our enemies, (Matt. v.) that we may be perfect, as our heavenly Father is perfect, who doth good even to the unjust. And he that is likest God is the best man, most holy, and most happy, and shall have most communion with God.

2. And when Christ came down in flesh to call man home by making God better known to the world, he revealed him in his attractive goodness; and that was by his own beneficence to man. He came to do the greatest good; to be the Savior of the world, and to reconcile revolted man to God; and all his life, yea, his death and heavenly intercession, is doing good to those that were God's enemies. And to learn of Christ and imitate his example, is to be his true disciples. And what else do his laws command us? They are all holy, just, and good; and our goodness is to love them and obey them. By keeping these, we must show that we are his disciples. When he tells you who you must do good to, in the instance of the Samaritan, he addeth, "Go thou and do likewise." He largely tells us of what importance it is for every branch that is planted into him to bring forth fruit; John xv.

3. It is much of the end of all sanctifying operations of the Holy Spirit. Grace is given us to use; even natural powers are given us for action. What the better were man for a tongue, or hands, or feet, if he should never use them? Life is a principle of action. It were as good have no life, as not to use it. And why doth God make men good, but that they may do good, even in their duty to God, themselves, and one another?

4. And it is God's great mercy to mankind, that he will use us all in doing good to one another; and it is a great part of his wise government of the world, that in societies men should be tied to it by the sense of every particular man's necessity; and it is a great honor to those that he maketh his almoners, or servants, to convey his gifts to others: God bids you give nothing but what is his, and no otherwise your own but as his stewards. It is his bounty, and your service or stewardship, which is to be exercised. He could have done good to all men by himself alone, without you or any other, if he would; but he will honor his servants to be the messengers of his bounty. You best please him, when you readily receive his gifts yourselves, and most fully communicate them to

others. To do good is to receive good ; and yet he will reward such for doing and receiving.

5. Self-love, therefore, should persuade men to do good to all. You are not the least gainers by it yourselves. If you can trust Christ, sure you will think this profitable usury. Is not a cup of cold water well paid for, when Christ performs his promise ? And is it not a gainful loss which is rewarded in this life an hundred fold, and in the world to come with life eternal ?

Those that live in the fullest exercise of love, and doing good, are usually most loved, and many are ready to do good to them. And this exercise increaseth all fruitful graces ; and there is a present delight in doing good, which is itself a great reward. The love of others makes it delightful to us ; and the pleasing of God, and the imitation of Christ, and the testimony of conscience, make it delightful. An honest physician is far gladder to save men's lives or health than to get their money. And an honest soldier is gladder to save his country than to get his pay. Every honest minister of Christ is far gladder to win souls than to get money or preferment. The believing giver hath more pleasure than the receiver ; and this without any conceit of commutative meriting of God, or any false trust to works for justification.

6. Stewards must give account of all. What would you wish were the matter of your true account, if death or judgment were to-morrow ? Would you not wish you had done all the good you could ? Do you believe that all shall be judged according to their works ? Did you ever well study that great prediction of Christ ? Matt. xxv.

And it is some part of a reward on earth, that men that do much good, especially that to whole nations, are usually honored by posterity, however they be rewarded by the present age.

7. Every true Christian is absolutely devoted to do good. What else is to be devoted to God, our Creator and Redeemer ? What live we for, or what should we desire to live for, but to do good ?

But this exhortation is especially applicable to them that have special opportunity.

i. Magistrates are the capitals in the societies and public affairs of mankind. They are placed highest that they may have an universal influence. Though it be too high a word to call them gods or God's vicegerents, (unless *secundum quid*.) yet they are his officers and regent ministers ; but it is for the common good. In them God shows what order can do in the government of the world. As the placing the same figure before many, doth accordingly advance its value in signification, so it is a wonder to note

what the place of one man signifieth at the head of an army, of a city, of a kingdom. They are appointed by God to govern men in a just subordination to God's government, and not otherwise ; to promote obedience to God's laws by theirs, and by their judgment and execution to give men a foretaste what they may at last expect from God ; and by their rewards and punishments to foretell men whom God will reward and punish ; and by their own examples to show the subjects how temperately, and soberly, and godly, God would have them live. Atheists can see and fear a magistrate, that fear not God, because they know him not.

They that prefer those as the most worthy of honor whom God abhorreth for their wickedness, and hate and oppress those whom God will honor, do show themselves enemies to him that giveth them all their power. And they that by countenance or practice do teach men to despise the fear of God, and to make light of drunkenness, whoredom, lying, perjury, and such like odious crimes, do, in a sort, blaspheme God himself, as if he who exalted them were a lover of sin, and a hater of his own laws and service. There are few rulers that are unwilling of power, or to be accounted great ; and do they not know, that it is a power to do good that God has given them ; and that obligation to do it is as essential to their office as authority ? And that they who govern as the officers of God, and pretend to be liker him in greatness than their subjects, must also be liker to him in wisdom and goodness ?

Woe to that man who abuseth and opposeth the just and faithful in the name of God, and by pretense of authority from him to do it ! Woe to him that in God's name, and as by his authority, countenanceth the wicked whom God abhorreth, and under Christ's banner fighteth against him ! As Christ saith of the offensive, "It were good for that man that he had never been born." "He that saith to the wicked, Thou art righteous, him shall the people curse ; nations shall abhor him ;" Prov. xxiv. 24. "He that justifieth the wicked, and he that condemneth the just, even they both are an abomination to the Lord ;" Prov. xvii. 15.

God looketh for great service from great men ; great trust and talents must have great account : a prince, a lord, a ruler, must do much more good, in promoting piety, conscience, virtue, than the best inferiors : to whom men give much, from them they expect the more.

It greatly concerneth such men seriously to ask their conscience, Can I do no more to encourage godliness, conscience, and justice, and to disgrace malignity, brutish sensuality, and fleshly lusts, than I have done ? O, when they must hear, "Give account of thy stewardship, thou shalt be no longer steward," little think many rulers what an account it is that will be required of them ! O,

what a deal of good may the rulers of the earth do, if, instead of overminding their partial interests, and serving the desires of the flesh, they did but set themselves with study and resolution to promote the common good, by disgracing sin, and encouraging wisdom, piety, and peace! And where this is not sincerely done, as surely as there is a righteous God, and a future judgment, they shall pay for their omisive treachery. And if Satan do prevail to set his own captains over the armies of the Lord, to betray them to perdition, they shall be deepest in misery, as they were in guilt. One would think the great delight that is to be found in doing good to all, should much more draw men to desire authority and greatness, than either riches, or voluptuousness, or a domineering desire that all men should fulfill their wills.

ii. The ministers of Christ also have the next opportunity to do good to many; and it is a debt that by many and great obligations they owe to Christ and men. But it will not be done without labor, and condescension, and unwearied patience. It is undertaken by all that are ordained to this office; but O that it were performed faithfully by all! What a doleful life would the perfidious soul-betrayers live, if they knew what a guilt they have to answer for!—even the contempt of the people's souls, and of the blood of Christ that purchased them! O hear that vehement adjuration (2 Tim. iv. 1, 2.) “I charge thee before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and kingdom, preach the word; be instant in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with all long-suffering and doctrine.” Speak with holy, studied skill; speak with love and melting pity; speak with importunity; take no denial; speak as St. Paul, (Acts xx.) publicly, and from house to house; speak before you are silenced in the dust; speak before death have taken away your hearers. It is for souls, it is for Christ, it is for yourselves too: while you have opportunity, do good to all. But of this I have formerly said more in my ‘Reformed Pastor.’

iii. And let all men take their common and special opportunities to do good: time will not stay; yourselves, your wives, your children, your servants, your neighbors, are posting to another world: speak now what you would have them hear; do them now all the good you can. It must be now or never; there is no returning from the dead to warn them. O live not as those infidels, who think it enough to do no harm, and to serve their carnal minds with pleasure, as born for nothing but a decent and delightful life on earth. You are all in the vineyard or harvest of the Lord: work while it is day, the night is at hand when none can work: woe to the slothful, treacherous hypocrite, when the judgment cometh.

Stay not till you are entreated to do good; study it, and seek it. Give while there are men that need, and while you have it, especially to the household of faith. Fire and thieves may deprive you of it; at the furthest, death will quickly do it. Happy are they that know their day, and, trusting in Christ, do study to serve him in doing good to all.

And the doctrine in hand doth further teach us some consecrations which all do not well consider.

I. That living chiefly to the flesh in worldly prosperity, and dropping now and then some small good on the by, to quiet conscience, is the property of an hypocrite. But to sound Christians, fruitfulness in doing good is the very trade of their lives, of which they are zealous, and which they daily study.

II. That all Christians should be very careful to avoid doing public hurt. It woundeth conscience to be guilty of wronging of any *one* man; we find it in dying men, that cannot die in peace till they have confessed wrongs, and made satisfaction, and asked forgiveness. And who knoweth but the many apparitions that have certainly been on such occasions may be done by miserable souls, to seek some ease of the torment of their own consciences? But to hurt many, even whole parishes, cities, churches, kingdoms, how much more grievous will it prove! And yet, alas! how quickly may it be done; and how ordinarily is it done! What grievous mischief may even well-meaning men do by one mistaken practice, or rash act! by the fierce promoting one error; by letting loose one passion, or carnal affection; by venturing once on secret sin; yea, by one rash, sinful word. How much more if they are drawn and set in an unlawful interest and way! And little know we, when a spark is kindled, how it will end, or how many ways Satan hath to improve it. And one hurtful action, or unwarrantable way, may blast abundance of excellent endowments, and make such a grievous damage to the church, who else might have been an eminent blessing. And if good men may do so much hurt, what have the enemies of godliness to answer for, who, by worldliness and malignity, are corrupters, dividers, and destroyers!

III. The text plainly intimateth that it is a great crime in them that, instead of doing good while they have opportunity, think it enough to leave it by will to their executors to do it. When they have lived to the flesh, and cannot take it with them, they think it enough to leave others to do that good which they had not a heart to do themselves; but a treasure must be laid up in heaven beforehand, and not be left to be sent after; (Matt. vi. 20, 21.) and he that will make friends of the mammon of unrighteousness

must now be rich towards God ; Luke xii. 21. It is no victory over the world to leave it when you cannot keep it ; nor will any legacy purchase heaven for an unholy, worldly soul.

IV. Yet they that will do good neither living nor dying are worst of all. Surely the last acts of our lives, if possible, should be the best ; and as we must live in health, so also in sickness, and to the last, in doing all the good we can ; and, therefore, it must needs be a great sin to leave our estates to those that are like to do hurt with them, or to do no good, so far as we are the free disposers of them.

The case, I confess, is not without considerable difficulties, how much a man is bound to leave to his children, or his nearest kindred, when some of them are disposed to live unprofitably, and some to live ungodly and hurtfully. Some think men are bound to leave them nothing ; some think they ought to leave them almost all ; and some think that they should leave them only so much as may find them tolerable food and raiment. I shall do my best to decide the case in several propositions.

1. The case is not with us as it was with the Israelites, who might not alienate their inheritances from the tribes ; yet even they had power to prefer a younger son, that was more deserving, before an elder, that was worse.

2. Where either law or contract have disabled a man to alienate his estate from an ungodly heir, there is no room for a doubt what he must do.

3. Nature teacheth all men to prefer a child that is pious and hopeful in his provisions, and legacies, before a stranger that is somewhat better, and not to alienate his estate for want of a higher degree of goodness.

4. When there is just cause to disinherit an elder son, a younger is to be preferred before a stranger ; or a kinsman, if there be no tolerable son.

5. And a son that ought not to be trusted with riches, or a great estate, yet ought to have food and raiment ; (unless he come to that state of obstinate rebellion in sin, for which God's law commanded the Israelites to bring forth their sons to be put to death ; in such cases the house of correction is fittest for them ;) yet should he have such food as may humble him, and not to gratify his lust.

6. If a man that hath the full power to dispose of his estate, real or personal, have sons and kindred, that, according to the judgment of sound reason, are like, if they had this estate, to do mischief with it, or maintain them in a wicked life, or in a mere unprofitable life of idleness, living only to themselves, and fleshly

ease and pleasure, that man ought to give his estate from such to some that are more likely to do good with it, and to use it for God, and the public benefit.

This is much contrary to the common course of most, that think no estate too great for their heirs, nor any portion too great for their daughters, be they what they will, or what use soever they are like to make of it: but these following reasons prove it to be true:—

Reason 1. Every man hath his estate from God, and for God, and is bound, as his steward, accordingly to use it. This is past doubt; and how doth that man use it for God, who leaveth it to one that is likely to use it for the devil, in a fleshly, unprofitable life? What account can such a steward give? Did God give it you to maintain idleness and sin?

Objection. O, but it is a son whom I am bound to provide for.

Answer. Are you more bound to your son than to yourself? God doth not allow you to spend it on yourself, to maintain idleness and vice; Rom. xiii. 13, 14. "Make no provision for the flesh to satisfy the lust (or will) thereof." And may you leave it for such a use as is forbidden both your son and you? It is God that is the owner of it, and it is to him that you must both use and leave it: "Whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God." And will you leave it to be the fuel of lust and sin?

Obj. I leave it not for sin; but if he misuse it, I cannot help it.

Ans. Would that excuse you, if you put a sword into a madman's hand, to say, I cannot help it if he use it ill? You might have helped it; it is supposed that you foreknew how he was like to use it.

Obj. But he may prove better hereafter, as some do. *Ans.* It is not bare possibilities that must guide a wise man's actions when probability is against them. Would you commit your children to the care of a madman, or a knave, because he may possibly come to his wits, or become honest? Have you not long tried him, and have you not endeavored to cure him of his idleness, wickedness, or lust? If it be not done, what ground have you to presume it will be done when you are dead? You may have so much hope as not utterly to despair of him; but that will not allow you to trust him with that which God made you steward of for his use and service.

But if such hopes may be gratified, give your estate in trust to some conscionable friend, with secret order to give it your son, or kinsman, if he become hereafter fit to use it according to the ends for which God giveth it.

Reas. 2. The obligation in my text of doing good to all, extend-

eth to the end of our lives, and, therefore, to our last will and testament. Therefore you must make your wills so as may do good to all, and not to cherish sin and idleness.

Reas. 3. You are bound to your best to destroy sin and idleness, and, therefore, not to feed and cherish it.

Reas. 4. Doing good is the very thing which you are created, redeemed, and sanctified for; and, therefore, you must extend your endeavors to the utmost, and to the last, that as much as may be, may be done when you are dead. If magistrates and ministers took care for no longer than their own lives, what would become of the state or church?

Reas. 5. The common good is better than the plenty of a sinful child; yea, it is to be preferred before the best child, and before ourselves, and, therefore, much more before the worst.

Reas. 6. It is a dreadful thing to be guilty of all the fleshly sins which your ungodly sons will commit with your estate, when they shall by it maintain the sins of Sodom, pride, fullness of bread, and abundance of idleness, if not to strengthen their hands for oppression or persecution, to think that they will spend their days in voluptuousness, because you give them provision for the flesh.

Reas. 7. It is cruelty to them that are already so bad, to make their temptations to sin much stronger, and their place in hell the worse, and to make the way to heaven as hard to them as for a camel to go through the eye of a needle; to prepare them to want a drop of water in hell, who were clothed richly, and fared sumptuously on earth; to entice them to say, 'Soul, take thine ease; thou hast enough laid up for many years;' till they hear, 'Thou fool, this night shall they require thy soul;' to cherish that love of the world which is enmity to God, by feeding that lust of the flesh, and lust of the eyes, and pride of life, which are not of the Father, but of the world.

Reas. 8. When this preferring unprofitable and ungodly children before God and the common good is so common and reigning a sin in the world, it is a great fault for religious men to encourage them in it by their example, and to do as they.

Reas. 9. It is a sin to cast away any of God's gifts. When Christ had fed men by a miracle, he saith, "Gather up the fragments, that nothing be lost." If you should cast your money into the sea, it were a crime; but, to leave to such as you foresee are most likely to use it sinfully, is more than casting it away.

If you saw men offer sacrifice to Bacchus, or Venus, you would abhor it: do not that which is so like it, as to leave bad men fuel for fleshly lust.

Reas. 10. It is the more dreadful, because it is dying in studied sin, without repentance. To put so much sin into one's will,

shows a full consent, and leaveth no room and time to repent of it.

On all these accounts, I advise all the stewards of God, as they love him, and the public good, and their own souls, while they have opportunity, even to the last breath, to do good to all, and to provide more for the common good than for superfluities to any, and than for the maintaining ungodly children in sin, to the increase of their guilt and misery.

Indeed, in the choice of a calling, employment, and condition of life, and place for their children, doing good should be preferred before their rising in the world; and they that justly endeavor to raise their families in wealth, honor, or power, should do it only that they might do the more good. But it is Satan's design to turn all God's mercies to the cherishing of wickedness, and even the love of parents to their children to the poisoning of their souls, the strengthening of their snares, and the hindrance of their own and other men's salvation. But it is shame and pity that they who in baptism devoted their children to God, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, renouncing the world, the flesh, and the devil, as under the banner of the cross, should labor all their life, that impenitently at death they may leave all that they can get to such as, in all probability, will use it in pride, fullness, and idleness, for the flesh, the world, and the devil, against him and his interest, from whom they received it; and to whom both they and all they had were once devoted.

When men are loath that their estates should remove from the name and family, (for which there may be just cause,) I take it for the safest way, as aforesaid, to trust some, as men do their children with guardians, by the advice of lawyers, to secure all from their unworthy heirs, for the next, or some other of the name and lineage, that proveth worthy.

There are many other good works by which some rich men may be very profitable to the commonwealth, such as setting all the poor on work, and building hospitals for the impotent, &c.; but these this city is happily acquainted with already; and though still there be much wanting, yet there is much done.

V. But one more I will presume to name only to you that are merchants, for I am not one who have the ear of princes, who are more able. Might not somewhat more be done than yet is, to further the gospel in your factories, and in our plantations? Old Mr. Eliot, with his helpers in New England, hath shown that somewhat may be done, if others were as charitable and zealous as they. The Jesuits and friars showed us, in Congo, Japan, China, and other countries, that much might be done with care and diligence. Though the Papal interest was a corrupt end, and

all the means which they used were not justifiable, when I read of their hazards, unwearied labors, and success, I am none of those that would deprive them of their deserved honor, but rather wish that we, who have better ends and principles, might do better than they, and not come so far behind them as we do, if half be true that Peter Maffius, and the Jesuits' epistles, and many other writers, tell us of them. I know that they had the advantage of greater helps from kings, and pope, and prelates, and colleges endowed with trained men and copious maintenance. But might not somewhat more be done by us than is yet done?

1. Is it not possible to send some able, zealous chaplains to those factories which are in the countries of infidels and heathens; such as thirst for the conversion of sinners, and the enlargement of the church of Christ, and would labor skillfully and diligently therein? Is it not possible to get some short Christian books, which are fitted for that use, to be translated into such languages that infidels can read, and to distribute them among them? If it be not possible also to send thither religious, conscionable factors, who would further the work, the case of London is very sad.

2. Is it not possible, at least, to help the poor ignorant Armenians, Greeks, Muscovites, and other Christians, who have no printing among them, nor much preaching or knowledge; and, for want of printing, have very few Bibles, even for their churches or ministers? Could nothing be done to get some Bibles, catechisms, and practical books printed in their own tongues, and given among them? I know there is difficulty in the way; but money, and willingness, and diligence, might do something.

3. Might not something be done in other plantations, as well as in New England, towards the conversion of the natives there? Might not some skillful, zealous preachers be sent thither, who would promote serious piety among those of the English that have too little of it, and might invite the Americans to learn the gospel, and teach our planters how to behave themselves christianly towards them, to win them to Christ?

4. Is it not possible to do more than hath been done to convert the blacks that are our own slaves, or servants, to the Christian faith? Hath not Mr. Goodwin justly reprehended and lamented the neglect, yea, and resistance of this work in Barbadoes, and the like elsewhere? 1. Might not better teachers be sent thither for that use? 2. Is it not an odious crime of Christians to hinder the conversion of these infidels, lest they lose their service by it, and to prefer their gain to men's souls? Is not this to sell souls for a little money, as Judas did his Lord? And whereas the law manumits them from servitude when they turn Christians, that it may invite them to conversion, (and this occasioneth wicked Chris-

tians to hinder them from knowledge,) were it not better move the government, therefore, to change that law, so far as to allow these covetous masters their service for a certain time, using them as free servants? 3. And whereas they are allowed only the Lord's day for their own labor, and some honest Christians would willingly allow them some other time instead of it, that they might spend the Lord's day in learning to know Christ, and worship God, but they dare not do it, lest their wicked neighbors rise against them, for giving their slaves such an example; might not the governors be procured to force the whole plantation to it by a law, even to allow their infidel servants so much time on another day, and cause some to congregate them for instruction on the Lord's days? Why should those men be called Christians, or have any Christian reputation, or privilege themselves, who think both Christianity and souls to be no more worth than to be thus basely sold for the gain of men's servilest labors? And what, though the poor infidels desire not their own conversion; their need is the greater, and not the less.

VI. I conclude with this moving inference: The great opposition that is made against doing good by the devil and his whole army through all the world, and their lamentable success, doth call aloud to all true Christians to overdo them. O what a kingdom of malignants bath Satan, doing mischief to men's souls and bodies through the earth! hating the godly; oppressing the just; corrupting doctrine; introducing lies; turning Christ's laborers out of his vineyard; forbidding them to preach in his name the saving word of life; hiding or despising the laws of Christ, and setting up their own wills and devices in their stead; making dividing, distracting engines, on pretense of order, government and unity; murdering men's bodies, and ruining their estates, and slandering their names, on pretense of love to the church and souls; encouraging profaneness, blasphemy, perjury, whoredom, and scorning conscience, and fear of sinning. What diligence doth Satan use through the very Christian nations, to turn Christ's ordinances of magistracy and ministry against himself, and to make his own officers the most mischievous enemies to his truth and kingdom, and saving work; to tread down his family and spiritual worship, as if it were by his own authority and commission! To preach down truth, and conscience, and real godliness, as in Christ's own name, and fight against him with his own word, and to teach the people to hate his servants, as if this pleased the God of love.

And, alas! how dismal is their success! In the East, the church is hereby destroyed by the barbarous Mahometans: the remnants by their prelates continued in sects, in great ignorance, and dead formality, reproaching and anathematizing one another, and little

hope appearing of recovery. In the West, a dead image of religion, and unity, and order, dressed up with a multitude of gauds, and set up against the life and soul of religion, unity and order, and a war hereupon maintained for their destruction, with sad success; so that, usually, the more zealous men are for the Papal and formal human image, the more zealously they study the extirpation of worshiping God in spirit and truth, and thirst after the blood of the most serious worshipers; and cry down them as intolerable enemies who take their baptism for an obliging vow, and seriously endeavor to perform it, and live in good earnest, as Christianity bindeth them; and they take it for an insufferable crime to prefer God's authority before man's, and to plead his law against any thing that men command them. In a word, he is unworthy to be accounted a Christian with them, who will be a Christian indeed, and not despise the laws of Christ, and unworthy to have the liberty and usage of a man that will not sin and damn his soul: so much more cruel are they than the Turkish tyrants, who, if they send to a man for his head, must be obeyed.

And is the devil a better master than Christ? And shall his work be done with greater zeal and resolution? Will he give his servants a better reward? Should not all this awaken us to do good with greater diligence than they do evil? And to promote love and piety more earnestly than they do malignity and iniquity? Is not saving church and state, souls and bodies, better worth resolution and labor than destroying them?

And the prognostics are encouraging. Certainly, Christ and his kingdom will prevail. At last, all his enemies shall be made his footstool; yea, shall from him receive their doom to everlasting punishment which rebels against omnipotency, goodness and mercy, do deserve. If God be not God, if Christ will not conquer, if there be no life to come, let them boast of their success; but when they are rottenness and dust, and their souls with devils, and their names are a reproach, Christ will be Christ, his promises and threatenings all made good; 2 Thess. i. 6, &c. He will judge it righteous to recompense tribulation to your troublers, when he cometh with his mighty angels in flaming fire, to take vengeance on rebels, and to be glorified in his saints, and admired in all true believers. And when that solemn judgment shall pass on them that did good, and that did evil, described Matt. xxv., with a "Come, ye blessed, inherit the kingdom," and "Go, ye cursed, into everlasting fire," doing good and not doing it, much more doing mischief, will be better distinguished than now they are, when they are rendered as the reason of those different dooms.

GOD'S GOODNESS VINDICATED;

FOR THE

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AND

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BECAUSE OF THE

PRESENT AND FUTURE MISERY OF MANKIND;

WITH RESPECT TO THE

DOCTRINE OF REPROBATION AND DAMNATION.

VOL. II.

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THE PUBLISHER TO THE READER.

How much the glory of God and the salvation of men is concerned in the right understanding of his goodness, in all his ways and counsels towards them, is evidently seen by all that have any true notion of the Divine Excellency and man's felicity. God's goodness is his most solemnly proclaimed name and glory. It is his goodness duly known, that leads sinners to repentance, and unites their hearts to fear his name, and excites, and forever terminates, that love which is our holiness and happiness to eternity. It is also too well known, how much this amiable Divine Goodness is denied or doubted of. What cavils are raised against it by men of corrupt minds! What secret prejudice lies against it, and how deeply rooted in our depraved nature! Yea, with how fearful suggestions and apprehensions are some godly Christians (especially those that lie in the darkness of melancholy) sometimes perplexed about it! And even such as are grounded and settled in it, are liable to be assaulted, and may sometimes stagger and stumble at it. And indeed, though the kindness of God towards men hath appeared in the world, as visible as the sun in the firmament, yet man's darkened understanding, and his connate sensuality and selfishness, taking occasion from the more mysterious parts of providence, and those especially that most contradict the wisdom and interest of the flesh, hath caused disputes, and raised doubts, against the truth of that which is in itself as clear and sure as that there is a God or a world, or any thing existent. Whereupon this author was earnestly desired, by a friend, to collect some principles in a narrow compass, that might silence cavilers, succor the tempted, and confirm the sound mind. And for these ends they are, with his permission, by his friend made public; Hosea xiv. 9. "Who is wise, and he shall understand these things? prudent, and he shall know them? for the ways of the Lord are right, and the just shall walk in them; but the transgressors shall fall therein."

April 27, 1671,

GOD'S GOODNESS VINDICATED.

To help all such persons out of the snare of this dangerous and troublesome temptation, as are described in the propounded case, we must have respect, I. To the special case of the melancholy, who are more liable than others to such disturbances. II. To the common cause of their trouble and perplexity, as it consisteth in such opinions as you describe.

I. With the melancholy, the greatest difficulty lieth in making them capable to receive plain truths; for it will work, not as it is, but as it is received. And melancholy doth breed and feed such kind of thoughts, as naturally as a dead carcass feedeth vermin. Of forty or fifty melancholy persons that I have to deal with, there are scarce four that are not hurried with suggestions to blasphemous thoughts against God and the Sacred Scriptures; and scarce two that are not under dismal apprehensions that they are miserable, undone creatures, (except only some that are all carried to conceits of prophecies, revelations, and some rare, exalting communications of light unto themselves.) This unhappy disease of melancholy is first seated in the organs of imagination and passion both; that is, in the spirits, and thereby in the very imagining faculty itself; though the natural parts being without pain or sickness, they will not believe that it is a disease at all. It inclineth them usually to solitariness, to musing, and to dismal thoughts, that they are undone, graceless, hopeless, &c., which because they passionately seem to feel, no words which silence them, will satisfy them; or if you seem a little to satisfy them to-day, it is all gone to-morrow; for a melancholy man is like the eye that looketh on all things through a colored glass, or in an ophthalmy, and seeth them according to the medium.

The disease, in some few, beginneth with over-stretching thoughts and troubles about things spiritual; but in most that I have met with, (ten to one,) it beginneth with some worldly cross, loss, or trouble, which grieveth them, and casteth them into troublesome anxieties and cares; and then when by these the spirits are diseased, it presently turneth upon conscience; first, against themselves, aggravating sin and misery, apprehending calamity from every thing which they see, hear, or think of; and next, against God and Scripture, perplexed in every thing that cometh before

them, and quarreling with all, and offended in all ; and usually they are importuned, as if it were by something else within them, to say some blasphemous word against God, or do some mischief against themselves ; no doubt through Satan's special instigation, who can work on men according to the advantage of their bodily and sensitive distempers, and can do that on a melancholy man, (though a godly man,) which he cannot do on another ; as he can also work on the choleric, phlegmatic, &c. according to their temper.

1. The cure of this must be by these means: (1.) You must not suffer them to be much alone. (2.) You must divert them from all musing, and turn it to discourse. (3.) You must keep from them displeasing things and persons, and help them to suitable, pleasing company and converse. (4.) You must change their air and company sometimes, that strange objects may change their imagination. (5.) Above all, if they have strength, you must not suffer them to be idle, to lie in bed longer than they sleep in the day ; nor to sit musing, but must get them upon the work of a lawful calling, and drive them on to so much diligence, that body and mind may be closely employed. This will be more than all other ordinary means. (6.) In most, meet physic also will do very much, which must be ordered by an experienced physician that is with them, or well knoweth them. (7.) Lastly, Their false thoughts also must be confuted, and their minds have due satisfaction. And if you cannot have all, or most of these done, you can hardly expect a cure, unless time wear it off, which is doubtful.

II. The falsehood and vexation of such men's thoughts, whether the melancholy or others, are brought to pass, 1. By a false method of reasoning. II. By false opinions which they have before received. I. It is a grossly deluding and subverting way of reasoning, to begin at dark and doubtful consequents, thence to argue against certain, clear, fundamental principles. As if from some doubts about the position and motion of the stars, or of the nature of light, heat, and motion, men should argue that there is no sun, or moon, or stars at all ; or that they have no power of light, heat, or motion ; or as if, from the many difficulties in anatomy, about the circulation of the blood, the '*oleum nervosum*,' the '*lympha*,' and its vessels, the passages and the '*succus*' of the pancreas and gall, the transcolation through the intestines into the '*venæ lacteæ*,' the chyly glandules, and such like, one should arise to a conclusion, that there is no blood, no chyle, no veins, no glandules, no head, no body ; or from the controversy, whether the heart be a mere muscle without any proper '*parenchymæ*,' one should grow to conclude that there is no heart ; so such persons, from points beyond man's reach, about God's decrees and inten-

tions, and the mysteries of providence, conclude or doubt against God's goodness; that is, whether indeed there be a God. I have spoken so fully to this case in my "Reasons of the Christian Religion," chapter iv. that I would desire you to peruse it. I shall now only give you twenty questions, which the tempted person may challenge all the subtlety and malice of hell to answer; for it is easy to justify the goodness of God.

Quest. 1. 'Is it not certain that there is a world, in which is abundance of created goodness?' The earth is but a point as to all the world. There is a sun, and moon, and multitudes of glorious stars, which are many of them manifold greater than the earth. There are angels, there are men, there are variety of creatures in this lower part of the creation, which have all their excellency: all the men on earth cannot, by any contribution of their counsels, discern the ten thousandth part of the excellency of this little parcel of God's works. And as to the whole, it is next to nothing which we comprehend: every worm, every plant excelleth the highest human apprehension. Is there no physical goodness in all this unmeasurable, this harmonious, this glorious frame? Look about you, look upwards, and deny it if you can. And is there no moral goodness in holy men and angels? And is there no felicity and glorious goodness in all the heavens? What mind can be so black as to deny all created goodness?

Quest. 2. 'Is not all the goodness of the whole creation communicated from God?' Did it make itself? Or who else made it? Are not all effects from their causes? And is he not the first cause? See what I have said to prove this fully in the aforesaid Treatise.

Quest. 3. 'Hath God made a world that is better than himself?' Could he give more goodness than he had to give? Must not he needs be better than all his works?

Quest. 4. 'Is he fit to be quarreled with for want of goodness, who hath infinitely more goodness than the whole world besides?' More than sun and stars, heaven and earth, angels and men, all set together in all their single and their united, harmonious worth? If he be better than all, is he not most beyond accusation or exception?

Quest. 5. 'Must not God necessarily excel his works? Must he needs make every worm a god? Or must he make any god, or equal to himself?' Is not that a contradiction? And is there not necessarily an imperfection in all that is not God? Nothing can be so great, so wise, so good, so holy, so immutable, so self-sufficient, so blessed, as God.

Quest. 6. 'Is not God's creation a harmonious universe, of which individuals are but the parts?' Are not the parts for the

whole, and their worth to be valued for the whole, or for the common ends? Must every pin in a watch, or every stitch in your garment, or every part of your house, or every member of your body, and every humor or excrement in it, have that excellency which may simply dignify itself in a compared or separated sense? Or rather must it not have that excellency which belongeth to it as a part of the whole for the common end of all together? Is not that best, that is best to the order, beauty, and usefulness of the universal frame?

Quest. 7. 'Is it necessary to this end, or to prove God's goodness, that all individuals, or species of creatures, must be of the highest rank or excellency?' Is God wanting in goodness, if every man be not an angel, or every angel made unchangeable, or every unlearned man a doctor, or every star a sun, or every cloud or clod a star, or every beast a man, or every worm an elephant, or every weed a rose, or every member a heart or head, or every excrement blood and spirits? Will you think that a man doth reason like a man, who thus disputeth, 'He that doth not do that which is best when he can do it, is not perfectly good, and therefore is not God. But he that maketh toads and serpents, and maketh the guts the passage of filthy excrements, when he could have made them equal with the heart, doth not do that which is best, when he can do it. Therefore he is not perfectly good; therefore he is not God; therefore there is no God; therefore there is no Creator; therefore the world hath no cause, or made itself, and preserveth itself. Therefore I made myself, and must rule and preserve myself.' Conclude next, 'Therefore I will never suffer nor die;' and thus prove the wisdom of such reasoning, if you can.

Quest. 8. If God made man and all things, 'did he not make them for himself, for the pleasure of his own will? Must he not needs in reason be the end of all, who is the beginning and cause of all?' And is not that means the best which is aptest to the end? And doth not the proper goodness of a means consist in its aptitude to promote the end? And then is not that the goodness of all creatures (partly to be what the Creator efficiently maketh them, and partly) to fulfill his will? And what creature hath not this goodness, as to the absolute will of his decrees, which all fulfill?

Quest. 9. 'Are not now both these conclusions of infallible certainty, and therefore not at all contradictory?' 1. That God is most good, because he is the cause of all the good in the whole creation? 2. And yet that there are toads, serpents, darkness, death, sickness, pains, &c., which, therefore, are no whit inconsistent

with his goodness? Neither of them being capable of a denial, or of a sober doubt.

Quest. 10. 'Is not an angel and man endued with reason and free-will, and left to choose or refuse his own rectitude, and felicity, (or misery,) capable of knowing, loving, serving, and enjoying God, if he will, and instructed by a perfect holy law (with rewards and punishments) to choose aright:—I say, is not such a creature as noble and as meet for God to make as a stone, or a toad, or worm, or serpent?' If God choose to please his own holy will, by making a world of such intellectual, free agents, whom he will (ordinarily) rule by the way of moral laws and motives, is this any disparagement to his wisdom and goodness? It is true, that such a mutable free-will is below a confirmed, immutable will. But it is as true, that a toad is below a man; and that infinite wisdom thought not meet to make all his creatures of one rank or size, nor to make all faces alike, nor all the stones in the street alike, but in wonderful variety. It is not then unbecoming God to make a world of rational free agents, under such a moral government by laws.

Quest. 11. If all these free agents have abused their liberty and undone themselves, if he so far show mercy to them all, as that they may be all happy if they will, and none of them shall perish but for willful and final refusing of the saving means and mercy which is offered to them; and if they will they may live with God himself, and Christ, and angels in endless glory; and none shall lose this free-given felicity, but for final refusal and contempt, preferring certain vanity and dung before it; and if officers be commissioned, and means provided, to acquaint all, in several measures, with the reasons why they should choose heaven and holiness before the dirty pleasures of sin, and to importune them daily to such a choice; and if a life of mercies be granted to allure them, and afflictions to drive them, and examples to invite them to choose aright;—I say, after all this, 'have any of these persons cause to complain, that God dealeth not mercifully with them?' Shall they, that will not accept of life and mercy offered them, accuse him as cruel that importuneth them to accept it?'

Quest. 12. 'Is the goodness of a king to be judged of by the interest of murderers in the gaol;' when he restrained them by laws; when he warned them by legal penalties; when he encourageth and protecteth all the good; when the lives of the innocent need this severity against the wicked; when the commonwealth would take him to be bad that would not restrain thieves and murderers by penalties? Yea, though this king could, if he would, have set constant guard on these men to have kept these men

from murdering, but he thinketh meet only to govern them by laws ; will you rather argue, that the gaol is a place of misery, therefore the king is cruel, than, the rest of the kingdom flourish in prosperity and peace, therefore the king is wise and gracious. And is not this little dirty spot of earth, the next door to hell, a place defiled by willful sin, and unfit to be the index of God's benignity, from whence we should take an estimate of it ?

Quest. 13. 'Do not all men in the world confess God's goodness first or last ?' Do not all true believers, that are themselves, acknowledge that he is infinitely good, and good to them, and that his mercy is over all his works, and endureth forever ? And do not the consciences of the damned grind and tear them for the contempt of goodness, and setting against mercy, even mercy to themselves ? This is the fuel that feedeth hell, not by way of delusion, but experimental conviction. If the man that doubteth of God's goodness and mercy to him, do despair or fear damnation, he foolishly contradicteth himself. For hell and damnation is a state of misery and torment in the loss, and in the conscience and sense, of refused and abused mercy. If, therefore, God be not merciful to you, then you need not fear being damned for sinning against and refusing mercy. For that which is not, cannot be sinned against or abused. If God be merciful, you may be saved if you will accept this mercy ; if he be not, you cannot in justice be damned for rejecting that mercy which was none. And if God be not merciful and just, he is not God. And if there be no God, there is none to damn you. But all confess, in heaven and hell, some with joy, and some with self-tormenting anguish, that God was inconceivably good and merciful.

Quest. 14. 'What if it were but one or two in a whole kingdom that were damned, and that only for obstinate, unpersuadable, final refusal of grace and salvation, and all the rest of the world should be saved ; tell me, would you then still suspect God of cruelty, or deny his goodness ?' If not, I further ask you :—

Quest. 15. 'Have you so good an acquaintance with the extent of the universe, the superior world, the number of angels and blessed spirits, as that you are sure that it is proportionably more in the whole universe, that are miserable ?' Though some peevish men have wrangled at what I have said of this in my forecited books, I am so far from flattering their self-conceited wisdom that I will say it over again : That it is agreed on by philosophers, that the earth, as to the universe, is no bigger than a point or inch is to the whole earth : we see over our heads a wonderful sun, a multitude of fixed and unfixed stars, of wonderful magnitude, divers of them many times bigger than all the earth ; besides the vast ethereal inter-

spaces : we see in a tube or telescope a marvelous likeness of the moon to this earth, with shades, inequalities, &c. Multitudes of stars, in the galaxy and elsewhere, are discernible in the telescope, which without it no eye can see : little know we how far the world extendeth itself, beyond all these stars and sun which we can see ; or whether there be millions of the like beyond our sight. The Scripture telleth us of innumerable angels, holy and glorious spirits that attend Christ in the service of this lower world. No Scripture telleth us whether all the glorious or blessed spirits be thus employed as angels for mankind, or whether ten thousand thousandfold more be otherwise employed. No Scripture or reason telleth whether sun or moon, stars and intermediate ether, be inhabited or not. It is temerity to affirm that they are. And it is a great temerity to say that they are not. It is lawful to doubt, and it is lawful to conjecture that it is most probable they are, considering, 1. That life is the excellency of the creation, and the dearest parts are the basest. 2. That the earth, and water, and air, are full of men, beasts, fishes, birds, worms, flies, &c. 3. That it is incredible to him that looketh upward, that sun, moon, stars, and ether, are baser regions than this dirty earth ; and consequently that they are baser as to their use and inhabitants. These thoughts of an uncertain thing are lawful to him that will go no further than he hath evidence, and not make an uncertain thing seem certain ; and certain it is that spirits are innumerable. And though some of these have fallen to be devils, God hath not told us how many ; nor can we know that it is one to a million of happier creatures. And can that man, then, who is offended with God, not for damning a very few, but for the proportion of the damned in comparison of others, tell what he saith ? Can he say, if God had cast off all this earth, that it had been more than one of a million of millions as to the whole creation ? It is true I cannot tell the number : but it is as true that when our foundation is sure, that God is infinitely wise and good, it is madness to accuse him as unwise, or evil, or cruel, for that which we must confess we do not know ; and to talk against him in the dark. Stay till you see who dwelleth in all the superior regions, and then take yourselves for fitter discerners of your Maker's ways.

Quest. 16. ' Are you well acquainted with the nature and degrees of the future miseries which tempt you to think that God is cruel ? ' They are not all of one degree ; what if much of them be still voluntary to the miserable souls ? The devils who are now tormented in hell, are yet inhabitants of the air, and exercised in voluntary acts of malice. I take it to be no small degree of hell which the ungodly choose, and love, and possess among us

here on earth, and will not be dissuaded from : they are without all holy communion with God, and they would be so ; they are out of heaven, and they would be so ; they are debased and confined to sensual pleasures, and worldly vanities, and they will be so ; they are the drudges of the devil, and the servants of the flesh, and the slaves of men, and they would be so ; they are defiled with sin, and imprisoned in their own concupiscence, and they would be so ; they are corrupted, and tantalized, and vexed, and tossed up and down, by their irregular desires ; in a word, they have the plague of sin, and have neither holiness, nor true happiness ; and so they will have it to be, and will not be cured : now these tempted persons can see a misery in pain ; but can see no such evil in sin, for which such pain should be inflicted ; when as sin itself, and that which they are willing of, is so great a part of their misery, as that, in this life, the rest is as nothing to it. And though, no doubt, much will be involuntary hereafter, we know not what the proportion will be between the voluntary and involuntary part.

And what makes these men that they do not pity a drunkard, a fornicator, a worldling, a sensual lord or gentleman, that hath no better than the shadows which he chooseth ? Neither the tempted, nor they themselves, would call God cruel if he would let them so live in health forever ; even a healthful beggar would call God merciful if he might never die, nor be more miserable. But princes or lords would call him cruel, if he should put them into the beggar's or laborer's case. You accuse not God as cruel for making toads and serpents, worms and vermin, because they are not troubled with their own condition ; but if you could imagine them to have the knowledge how much happier men are, the case would alter. Or if God should change men into toads and serpents, you would call him unmerciful ; when yet he is no more bound anecedently to man than unto them. Thus because these tempted persons have, as Adam when his eyes were opened, a disquieting knowledge to know good and evil penally, their own apprehension (as Adam's of his nakedness) maketh that seem cruelty, which seemed a fruit of goodness before.

The sum is, when you come into another world, and see what manner of punishment it is that God exerciseth on the damned, (as well as on how many,) you will then be perfectly satisfied, that there is nothing but that amiable justice, which is the fruit of holiness, goodness and wisdom in it all ; and you shall see nothing in the punishment of the miserable which you shall either blame or wish were otherwise, if you come to heaven.

To which let me add, when you come to see the heavenly glory, and how the God of infinite goodness hath advanced such in-

numerable hosts (if not worlds) of men and angels into such wonderful felicity, and compare this with the sufferings of the devil, and of his damned followers, instead, then, of quarreling with the goodness of God, you will be wrapt up in the admirations and praises of it with full delights, to all eternity.

Quest. 17. 'And tell me, Is he fit to entertain suspicions and quarrels with God, who knoweth God to be God, and knoweth himself to be but a man?' I speak not only in respect of our inferiority, as the potsherd should not quarrel with the potter; but in respect of our great and certain ignorance. Are we not puzzled about the poorest worm and pile of grass, whose manifold mysteries no mortal man can yet discover? Are we not grossly ignorant about every thing (even visible and palpable) which we see, and touch, and have to do with? Do we not know that we know but little, even of ourselves, or of any thing about us in the world? And shall the darkened soul, while it must operate in such a puddle of brains and humors, be so madly proud, as to presume of a knowledge which findeth out errors and badness in God, who is infinitely wise and good? Nothing is more sure than that God is most wise and good; and nothing should be more easily known to us, than that we are very blind and bad. And if such wretches, then, cannot reconcile their thoughts about God's works, should they not rather suspect themselves than him? Suspect, did I say? should they not take it as the surest verity, that it is God, that is not only justifiable, but infinitely amiable and laudable, and that it is worse than brutishness for such moles to be his accusers?

Quest. 18. Yea, 'is this accusing God a fit employment for that person who liveth in a land of mercies; who hath been bred up in mercy, preserved by mercy, yea, differenced by saving mercy from the ungodly; who hath been called from blindness, carnality, and profaneness, and entertained many a time in holy worship with God; who hath been washed in Christ's blood, and justified from so many and grievous sins, and made of an enemy an adopted child, and of an heir of hell an heir of heaven, and all this by the tender mercies of a provoked God, a gracious Redeemer, and a holy Sanctifier?' Shall this person, I say, this, be one that, instead of praising God with the raptures of continual joy, shall turn his accuser? O let the guilty that readeth this stop here, and fall down on his knees to God, and melt into tears in the sense of such unkindness.

Quest. 19. 'But can a child of God be possibly guilty of so great a sin as this?'

Ans. I speak not now of the malignant atheist; but of the melancholy, tempted persons. Alas! it is the melancholy disease,

and the devil more than he. God pitieth his children's frowardness, especially when necessitated naturally by diseases; and he that pardoned peevish Jonas, that said, "I do well to be angry to the death;" and complaining Job; and excused his sleepy disciples with "The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak," will not condemn an upright soul, for the effect of a feverish delirium, or a melancholy that overcomes his natural power of resistance.

Quest. 20. 'Would you thus argue or quarrel against God's greatness and wisdom, as you do against his goodness?' You suspect him to be unmerciful, because he cureth not men's sins, and preventeth not their damnation. And have you not the like occasion to argue against his other perfections? Do you think he reasoneth soberly that saith, 'He that maketh asses when he might have made them men, or maketh idiots, or maketh stones that know nothing; he that is the governor of such a foolish, distracted, confused world as mankind is, is foolish himself, or unskillful in government, or wanteth wisdom. But God doth thus.' Is he not worse than a fool that will accuse his God of folly? Doth not the admirable harmony of all the world, and his wonderful work in every creature, prove his incomprehensible wisdom? And what would you say to him that should thus reason: 'He that maketh impotent worms, that suffereth the good to die, that suffereth the tyrants of the earth to persecute his church and cause, is impotent, and not almighty. But so doth God.' Would you not say, 'I have the wonderful frame of heaven and earth, the sun and stars, the sea and land, to prove to me that he is almighty. This, therefore, is a proved foundation truth, to which all doubts must be reduced.' And if you dare not be so impudent as to deny his omniscience or omnipotence, when you think there is error or impotency in his works, why will you any more deny his goodness when you dream that there is badness in his works? Do you not know, that power, wisdom, and goodness are God's three essential principles of operation, virtues, or properties? And that they are none of them greater or less than other? And that his goodness (though not as to be measured by human interest) is equal to his wisdom and his greatness? And do you not know, that to deny any one of the three, yea, to deny the perfection of any one of them, is to deny that there is any God? And is he sober that will argue, 'There are frogs and toads, there are worms and asses, there are fools and miserable sinners, therefore there is no God;' when as there could neither be any of these, nor any world or being, if there were no God?

Quest. 21. Lastly, now consider, 'whether, evidently, the root of all this sin be not (besides melancholy and Satan) the power

of selfishness, and sensual or fleshly interest.' Alas! poor men, that were made for their God, to rejoice wholly in pleasing him, and to show forth the lustre of his glory, are fallen to themselves and flesh; and now they that should wholly devote and refer themselves to God, do strive to make God a servant to themselves, and measure his goodness by the standard of their fleshly sense and interest; and God shall be with them no longer good, that is, no longer God, than he will give them their wills, and serve their flesh, and keep them from crosses, and losses, and pains, and govern the world according to their fancies; and when they are committing this odious, self-exalting idolatry, and abasing God, even then will they judge themselves both wiser and more merciful than he. Yea, when a melancholy man despaireth in the sense of his own sin and badness, at that very time he thinketh himself more merciful than the God of infinite goodness, and accuseth his God for being more cruel than he himself. O man, into what distraction and confusion art thou fallen, when thou departest from thy God, and sinkest into that blind and wretched self!

And tell me, what if but the wills of all the poor, the pained, the dying, &c., were but reconciled to their suffering state? Would that which pleaseth the will be matter of any complaint? You may see, then, that it is not God's providence, &c., but the wills and ways of sinners, that are the diseased causes of all their wranglings. And if our wills were cured, and reduced to God's will, we should find no fault with him; if I can but be truly willing of imprisonment, poverty, or death, how can I feel any thing in it to complain of? When even sinners, as aforesaid, do obstinately here take their misery for their happiness, and are contented with it so far as it is voluntary.

By that time these twenty questions are answered, the accusations of God, as wanting goodness, will all turn to the accuser's shame.

II. I am next briefly to detect the false opinions which do ordinarily cause these persons' errors.

1. It is false doctrine to affirm that God condemneth the greatest part of his intellectual creatures, (as I have showed,) though he condemn never so many of this ungodly world.

2. It is not true that God decreeth to condemn any man but for sin, (for sin, I say, as the cause of his damnation.)

3. God decreeth to condemn none at age (which I add but to exclude foolish cavils) for Adam's sin only; nor for any other sin only that is not conjoined with an obstinate, final impenitency, and rejecting offered mercy, and neglecting means appointed for their salvation.

4. God's decrees do cause no man's sin, (nor his damnation any further than as supposing sin;) for Dr. Twisse himself still professeth, 1. That reprobation is an immanent act, and '*nihil ponit in objecto,*' putteth nothing at all into the person. 2. And that reprobation inferreth no necessity of sin or misery, but that which is called '*necessitas consequentiæ,*' and not any '*necessitas consequentis;*' and Arminius and all confess that God's bare foreknowledge causeth or inferreth a '*necessitas consequentiæ,*' which truly is but a logical necessity in order of argumentation, when one thing is proved by another; and not by physical necessity in order of causation, as one thing is caused by another.

And whereas they say, 'Then man might have frustrated God's decree,' I ask them whether man can frustrate God's foreknowledge; suppose God to foreknow sin without decreeing it, (of which more anon,) is not this a good argument, 'All that God foreknoweth will certainly come to pass. But God foreknoweth, e. g. Judas's sin; therefore it will certainly come to pass.' And what of all this? It doth not come to pass, because God foreknoweth it, any more than the sun will rise to-morrow, because you foreknow it.

And if you say, that no power can frustrate God's foreknowledge, I answer, they are delusory words of one that knoweth not what he saith. For it is one thing to have power to make God ignorant, and another thing to have power to do otherwise than that which he foreknoweth you will do. No man hath power to make God ignorant; but all sinners may have power to do otherwise than that which God foreknoweth they will do. For God doth not foreknow that, e. g. Gehazi shall not have power to forbear a lie; but only that he will not forbear it. Yea, more, God's foreknowledge doth prove that sinners have power to do otherwise; for that which God foreknoweth will be. But God foreknoweth that men will abuse their power to sin, or will sin when they had power to do otherwise; therefore it will be so in the event.

Now, if you will call their power to do otherwise a power to frustrate God's foreknowledge, you will but speak foolishly. For the power itself is foreknown; and the object of knowledge '*in esse cognito,*' is not after the act of knowledge. And if the person will not actually sin, God could not foreknow that he will sin. So that foreknowledge is here (when it is not casual) but a medium in a syllogism, and inferreth only the necessity of the consequence in arguing, and doth not cause the thing foreknown.

Now, when Dr. Twisse saith, that all the schoolmen agree, that no necessity, '*consequentis,*' or of causation, but only '*consequentiæ,*' doth follow the decree of reprobation, see how far he and

Arminius are in this agreed, (though I know some give another sense of 'necessitas consequentiæ.') But I come closer to the matter yet.

5. God decreeth no man's sin; neither Adam's nor any other's. He may decree the effect, which sinners accomplish, (as the death of Christ,) and he may overrule men in their sin, and bring good out of it, &c. But sin is not a thing that he can will or cause, and so not decree, which signifieth a volition.

6. God cannot be proved to decree or will the permission of man's sin. For to permit is nothing. It is but not to hinder; which is no act; and to decree and will is a positive act. And if you fain God to have a positive volition or nolition, of every thing, or negative, then he must have positive decrees of every mere possible atom, sand, worm, name, word, thought of man, &c. that such and such a nothing shall never be; whereas there needeth no more to keep any thing from being (in this case) than God's not causing it, not willing it, not decreeing it. The creature's active nature, disposition, objects, and circumstances, are here presupposed; and the impedition necessary, is by act, or subtraction of these aforesaid, and God's 'non agere' needs no positive decree. I must tell the learned reader, that this room will not to answer his foreseen objections. But I hope I have done it sufficiently elsewhere.

7. God hath not only decreed to give, but actually given, a great deal of mercy to them that perish, which had a natural tendency to their salvation. Christ hath so far died for all, as that none shall perish for want of a sufficiency in the satisfaction made: he hath purchased and given for all a grant or gift of himself, with pardon, justification, adoption, and right to glory, on condition of acceptance, (where the gospel cometh.) In a word, so that none of them shall perish, that do not finally refuse the grace and salvation offered them.

8. Men are not impenitent and unbelievers for want of that called natural faculty, or power to choose and refuse aright; but for want of a right disposition of their own wills; and by such a moral impotency, which is indeed their viciousness, and the wickedness of their wills, and doth not excuse, but aggravate the sin. (See Mr. Truman, of "Natural and Moral Impotency.")

9. To rectify men's wicked wills and dispositions, God giveth them a world of means; the whole creation, and documents of providence; all the precepts, promises, threats of Scripture; preaching, example, mercies, judgments, patience, and inward motions of the Spirit; all which might do much to men's conversation and salvation, if they would but do what they could on their own part.

10. Adam could have stood when he fell without any more grace than that which he abused and neglected. God's grace, which was not effectual to him, was as much as was necessary to his standing, if he would have done his best; and it was left to his free-will to have made that help effectual by improvement. He fell, not because he could not stand, but because he would not.

11. For aught any can prove, multitudes that believe not now, but perish, may have rejected a help as sufficient to their believing, as Adam's was to his standing.

12. All men have power to do more good, and avoid more evil than they do; and he that will not do what he can do, justly suffereth.

13. Heathens and infidels are not left unredeemed under the remediless curse, and covenant of innocency, which we broke in Adam; but are all brought by the redemption wrought by Christ, under a law, or terms, of grace. (1.) God made a covenant of grace with all mankind in Adam; (Gen. iii. 15.) who was by tradition to acquaint his posterity with it, as he did to Cain and Abel the ordinances of oblation and sacrifice. (2.) This covenant was renewed with all mankind in Noah. (3.) This covenant is not repealed, otherwise than by a more perfect edition to them that have the plenary gospel. (4.) The full gospel covenant is made for all, as to the tenor of it, and the command of preaching and offering it to all. (5.) They that have not this edition, may yet be under the first edition. (6.) The Jews, under the first edition, were saved without believing in this determinate person of Jesus, or that he should die for sin, and rise again, and send down the Spirit; for the apostles believed it not beforehand; (Luke xviii. 34. John xii. 16. Luke ix. 45. Mark ix. 34. Luke xxiv. 21. 25, 26. Acts i. 6—8.) yet were they then in a state of saving grace, as appeareth by John xiv. xv. xvi. xvii. throughout. (7.) The rest of the world that had not the same supernatural revelation, were not then bound to believe so much as the Jews were about the Messiah. (8.) God himself told them all, that they were not under the unremedied curse of the covenant of innocency, by giving them a life full of those mercies which they had forfeited, which all did tend to lead them to repentance, and to seek after God (Rom. ii. 4. Acts xvii. 27.) and "find him; yea, he left not himself without witness, for that which may be known of him, and his invisible things are manifested and clearly seen in his works;" so that the wicked are without excuse; Rom. i. 19, 20. Acts xiv. 17. So that all heathens are bound "to believe that God is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him;" (Heb. xi. 6.) and are all under the duty

of using certain means, in order to their own recovery and salvation, and to believe that they are not commanded to do this in vain ; so that God's own providence, by a course of such mercies, which cannot stand with the execution of the unremedied, violated law of innocency, together with his obliging all men to repentance, and to the use of a certain course of means, in order to their salvation, is a promulgation of a law of grace, according to the first edition, and distinguisheth man from unredeemed devils.

And they that say that all the infidel world have all this mercy, duty, means, and hope, without any redemption or satisfaction of Christ as the procuring cause, are in the way to say next, 'That the church's mercies too might have been given without Christ.' (9.) "Of a truth, God is no respecter of persons, but in every nation he that feareth God and worketh righteousness is accepted with him ;" Acts x. 34, 35. For "God will render to every man according to his deeds ; to them who, by patient continuance in well doing, seek for glory, and honor, and incorruptibility, eternal life ;" Rom. ii. 6, 7. "Glory, honor, and peace, to every man that worketh good, to the Jew first, and also to the Greek ;" ver. 10. "For there is no respect of persons with God ;" ver. 11. "For when the Gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these, having not the law, are a law unto themselves, which show the work of the law written in their hearts, their consciences also bearing witness, and their thoughts the meanwhile accusing or else excusing one another ;" ver. 14, 15. And they shall be judged according to that law, which they were under, natural or mosaical, "even by Jesus Christ ;" ver. 12, 16. And it is the work of the Spirit promised to believers, to write the law of God in their hearts.

(10.) Though a special promise was made to Abraham, as an eminent believer, and the Jewish nation were the peculiar people of God, advanced to greater privileges than any others in the world ; yet were they not the whole kingdom of God the Redeemer, nor the only people that were in a covenant of grace, or in a state of salvation. For Shem was alive after Abraham's death, who was not like to be less than a king, and to have a kingdom and a people governed according to his fidelity. And Melchisedee was a king of righteousness and peace, not like to be Shem by the situation of his country. And a righteous king would govern in righteousness. Job and his friends are evidences of the same truth. And we have no proof or probability that all Abraham's seed by Ishmael, and Esau, and Keturah, were apostates, for they continued circumcision. And what all the rest of the world was, we know not, save that, in general, most grew idolatrous, and the

Canaanites in special. But that they all apostatized from the covenant of grace made with Adam and Noah, there is no proof. We have not the history of any of their countries fully, so as to determine of such cases. In Nineveh God ruled by that law of grace which called them to repent, and spared them upon their belief and repentance; "Because he was a gracious God, and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repenteth of the evil;" Jonah iv. 2.

And that God dealeth not with mankind now as the mere judge of the violated law of innocency, he declareth not only by the full testimony of his providence, or mercies given to the sinful world, but also by the very name, which he proclaimeth unto Moses (which signifieth his nature, and his mind towards others, and not what he is to Jews alone;) *Exod. xxiv. 6, 7.* "The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity, and transgression, and sin." All which is inconsistent with the relation of God, as a judge of a people, only under the curse of an unremedied, violated law, and unredeemed, though he add, "and that will by no means clear the guilty," &c., that is, will neither judge them innocent that are guilty of the crime, nor judge them to life that are guilty of death, according to the tenor of the law which they are under; '*Purificando non purificabit*' as the literal version; that is, will not judge unjustly, by acquitting him that is to be condemned, or as the Chaldee paraphrase hath it, 'not justifying those that are not converted.'

It is enough for us, therefore, to know, that the visible church hath manifold privileges above all others; *Rom. iii. 1—3, &c.* And that salvation is more easy, sure, and plenteous, where the gospel cometh, than with any others; and that we have, therefore, great cause to rejoice with thankfulness for our lot, and that the poor world lieth in wickedness, and must be pitied, prayed for, and helped to our power, and that "God is the Savior of all men, but especially of them that believe; and that he is good to all, and his mercies are over all his works;" and that he will never damn one soul that loveth him as God. But what is in the hearts of all men in the world, and consequently how they shall be used at last, he only that searcheth the heart can tell; and it is neither our duty nor our interest, nor possible to us, to know it of all particulars, much less to conclude, that none among them have such love, who believe him to be infinitely good, and to be to them a merciful, pardoning God. And we know withal, that all they that know not Jesus Christ, as this determinate person that was born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified,

dead, buried, rose again, &c., do yet receive all the aforesaid mercies by him, and not by any other name or mediation, nor yet without his purchasing mediation.

14. And if, besides all the mercy that God showeth to others, he do antecedently and positively elect certain persons, by an absolute decree, to overcome all their resistances of his Spirit, and to draw them to Christ, and by Christ to himself, by such a power and way as shall infallibly convert and save them, and not leave the success of his mercy, and his Son's preparations, to the bare uncertainty of the mutable will of depraved man, what is there in this that is injurious to any others? Or that representeth God unmerciful to any but such whose eye is evil, because he is good, and as a free benefactor, may give more mercy to some than others of equal demerits? If they that hold no grace but what is universal, and left, as to the success, to the will of man, as the determining cause, do think that this is well consistent with the mercifulness of God; surely they that hold as much universal grace as the former, and that indeed all have so much as bringeth and leaveth the success to man's will, and deny to no man any thing which the other give, do make God no *less* merciful than they; but *more*, if they moreover assert a special decree and grace of God, which, with a chosen number, shall antecedently infallibly secure his ends, in their repentance, faith, perseverance, and salvation. Is this any detraction from, or diminution of his universal grace? Or rather a higher demonstration of his goodness? As it is no wrong to man that God maketh angels more holy, immutable and happy.

15. And what if men cannot here tell how to resolve the question 'Whether any, or how many, are ever converted and saved, by that mere grace which we call sufficient, or rather necessary, and common to those that are not converted; and whether man will ever make a saving, determining improvement of it;' must plain truth be denied, because difficulties cannot easily be solved? And yet in due place I doubt not but I have showed, that this question itself is formed upon false suppositions, and is capable of a satisfactory solution.

16. I conclude in general, that nothing is more sure, than that God is most powerful, wise, and good, and that all his works, to those that truly know them, do manifest all these in conjunction and perfect harmony; and that, as to his decrees and providences, he is the cause of all good, and of no sin in act or habit, and that our sin and destruction is of ourselves, and of him is our holiness and salvation; and that he attaineth all his ends as certainly as if men's will had no liberty, but were acted by physical necessitation; and yet that man's will hath as much natural liberty as if

God had not gone before it with any decree of the event, and as much moral liberty as we have moral virtue or holiness.

And these principles I have laid down in a little room, that tempted persons may see, that it is our dark and puzzled brains, and our selfish, diseased hearts, that are the cause of our quarreling with God, his decrees and providences; and as soon as we come to ourselves and are cured, these odious apprehensions vanish, and God appeareth as the unclouded sun, in the lustre of his amiable goodness; and when we come to heaven, we shall see, to our joy, and his glory, that heaven, earth and hell declare him to be all perfectly good, without any mixture of evil in himself, or in any of his word or works. And we shall find all our sinful suspicions and murmurings turned into a joyful consent to the angelical praises. Psalm cxxxvi. 1, 2. 26, &c. "O give thanks unto the Lord, for he is good, for his mercy is forever. O give thanks unto the God of heaven, for his mercy is forever." Rev. iv. 8. 11. "Holy, holy, holy Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come. Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory, and honor, and power; for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created." Rev. vii. 12. "Amen: Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honor, and power, and might, unto our God forever and ever: Amen.—The Lord is good to all, and his tender mercies are over all his works. The Lord is gracious and full of compassion, slow to anger, and of great mercy;" Psalm cxlv. 8, 9. "The word of the Lord is right, and all his works are done in truth: he loveth righteousness and judgment: the earth is full of the goodness of the Lord;" Psalm xxxiii. 4, 5. "O how great is thy goodness which thou hast laid up for them that fear thee! which thou hast wrought for them that trust in thee before the sons of men!" Psalm xxxi. 19. "O therefore that men (instead of quarreling with his unknown mysteries) would praise the Lord for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men;" Psalm cvii. 8. 15. 21. 31.

In the conclusion, I take it to be wholesome advice to those that are under this temptation,

1. That they will oft read over the Psalms of praise, and think, when they read them, whether David and the ancient church were not more likely to know what they said, than a self-conceited, or a melancholy, tempted sinner?

2. That they would consider who it is that is the grand enemy of the glory of God's goodness, and they shall soon find that it is none other than the devil; none but he that is most evil can most envy Infinite Goodness his honor. And is the devil fit to be believed against God? And that after the warning of our first parents'

ruin, which befell them for believing Satan, when he slandered both God's wisdom, truth and goodness to them?

3. That they would bethink them to what end it is, that the tempter and the enemy of God do thus deny his goodness. Is it not a plain act of malice against God and us? Is it not that he may disgrace God as evil, and rob him of his glory; and also that he may hinder man from loving him, and so destroy all piety, and virtue, and goodness in the world? Who can love him whom he believeth to be bad, and so unlovely? And what grace or happiness can there be without the love of God?

4. That they would think what horrid wickedness this sin containeth, (where melancholy and involuntariness do not extenuate it.) Is it any better than a denying that there is any God? As is said before; to be God, is to be perfectly powerful, wise, and good; and if there be none such, there can be no God. And then who made the world, and all that is good in it by derivated goodness? Yea, is it not to represent the most amiable, blessed God in Satan's image ("who is most evil, and a murderer from the beginning;" John viii. 44.) that so men may hate him, and fly from him as they do from devils? And can you tell how great a crime this is?

5. That they would consider how this impious conceit is calculated for the licensing of all manner of villany in the world, and to root out all the relics of goodness from among mankind. For who can expect that any man should be better than his Maker, and that he should have any good, who denieth God to be good?

6. That they would labor hard to be better themselves; for he that hath a true created goodness, is thereby prepared to relish and admire God's primitive, uncreated goodness; whereas a wicked or a guilty sinner cannot much value that which he is so unsuitable to, and which he thinks will be to him a consuming fire. "Truly God is good to Israel, and to such as are of a clean heart;" Psal. lxxiii. 1. But he that liveth in the love of sin, will be doubting of the love of God, and fearful of his wrath, and unfit to relish and delightfully perceive his goodness. "Taste and see that the Lord is good; blessed is the man that trusteth in him;" Psalm lxxxiv. 8.

7. Study God's love as manifested in Christ; then you shall see what man on earth may see. But think not falsely, narrowly, or basely of his office, his performance, or his covenant.

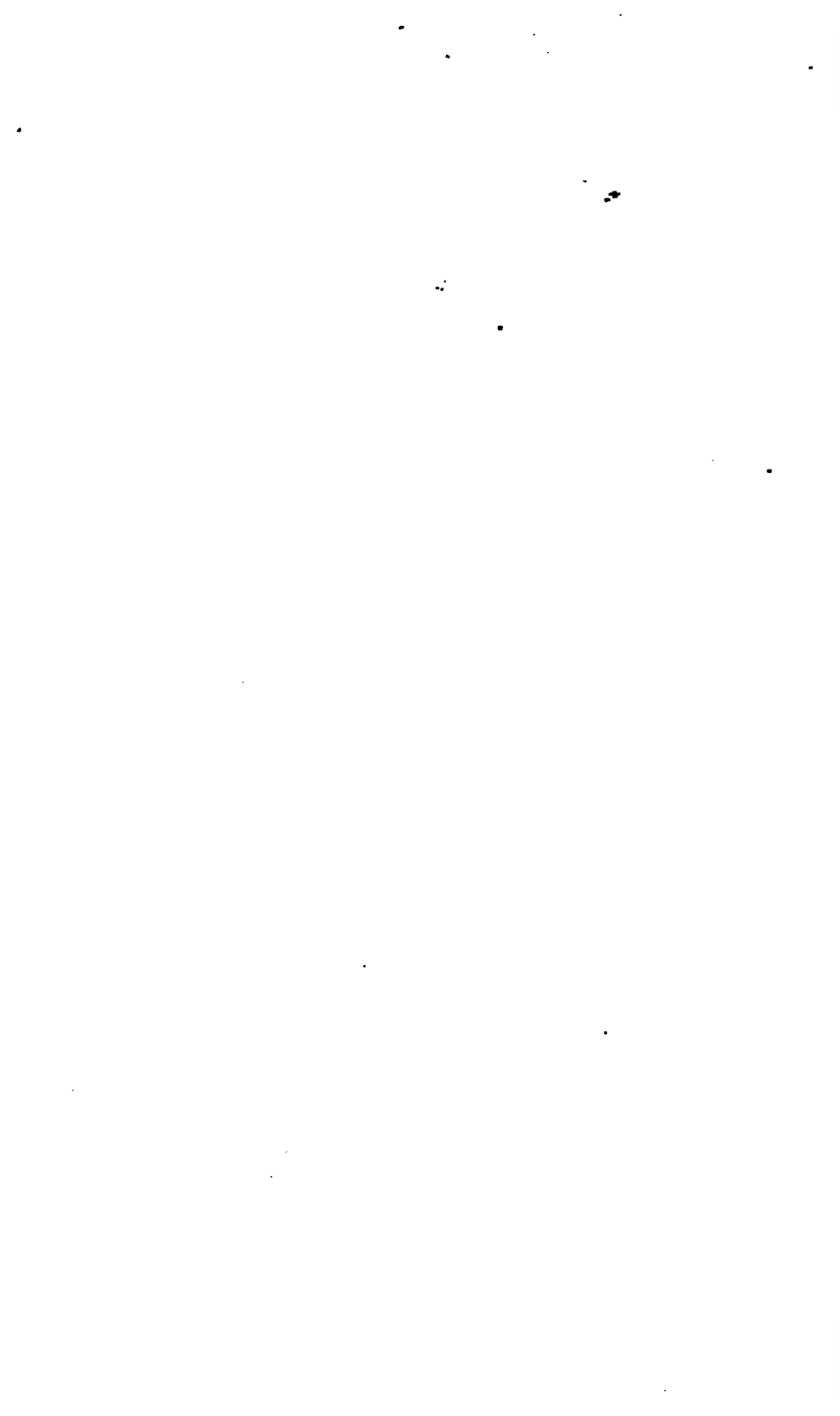
8. Dwell in the believing foresight of the celestial glory; the reflections of which may wrap up a believing soul on earth, into ecstasies of gratitude and delight.

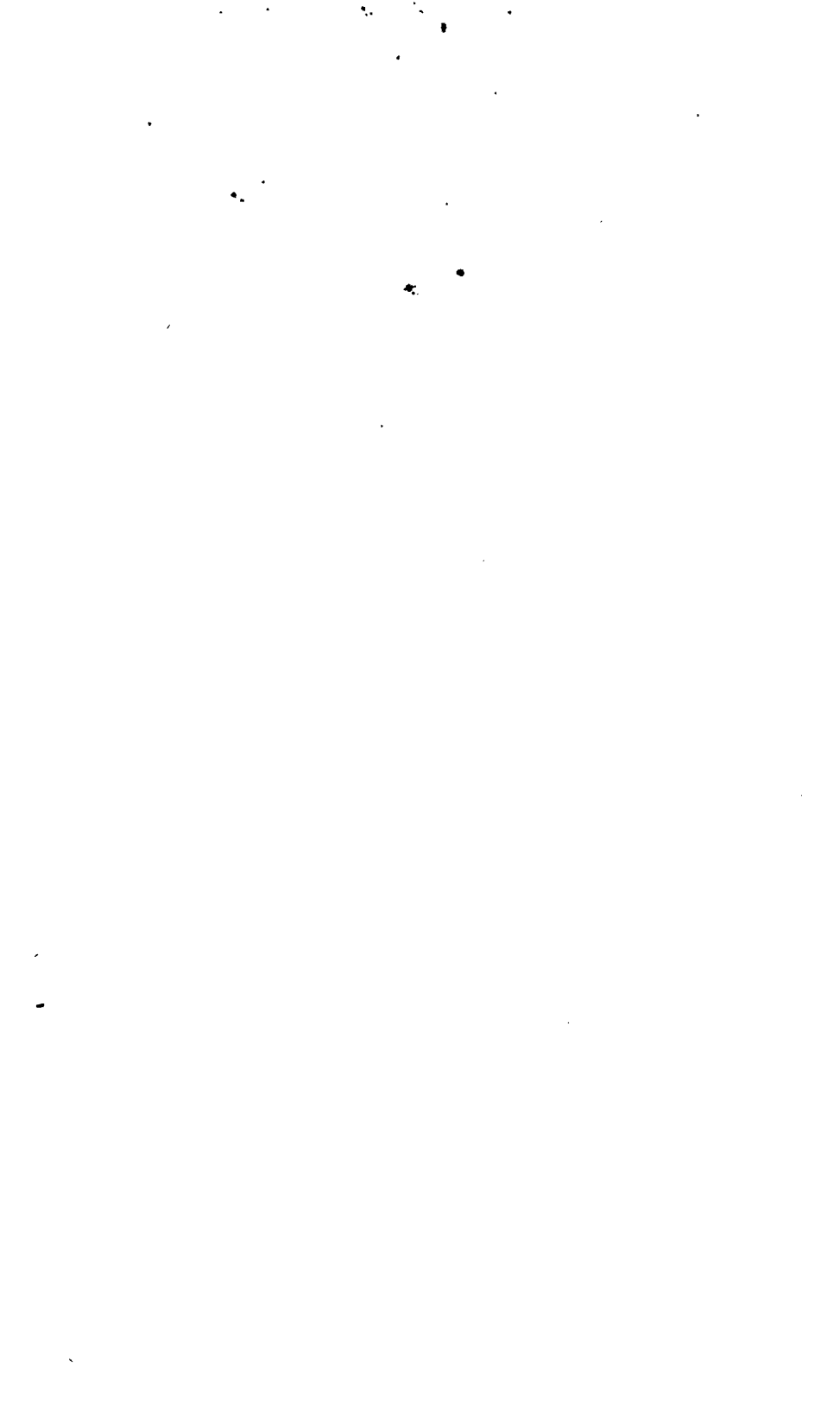
9. Remember what goodness there is in the holiness of God,

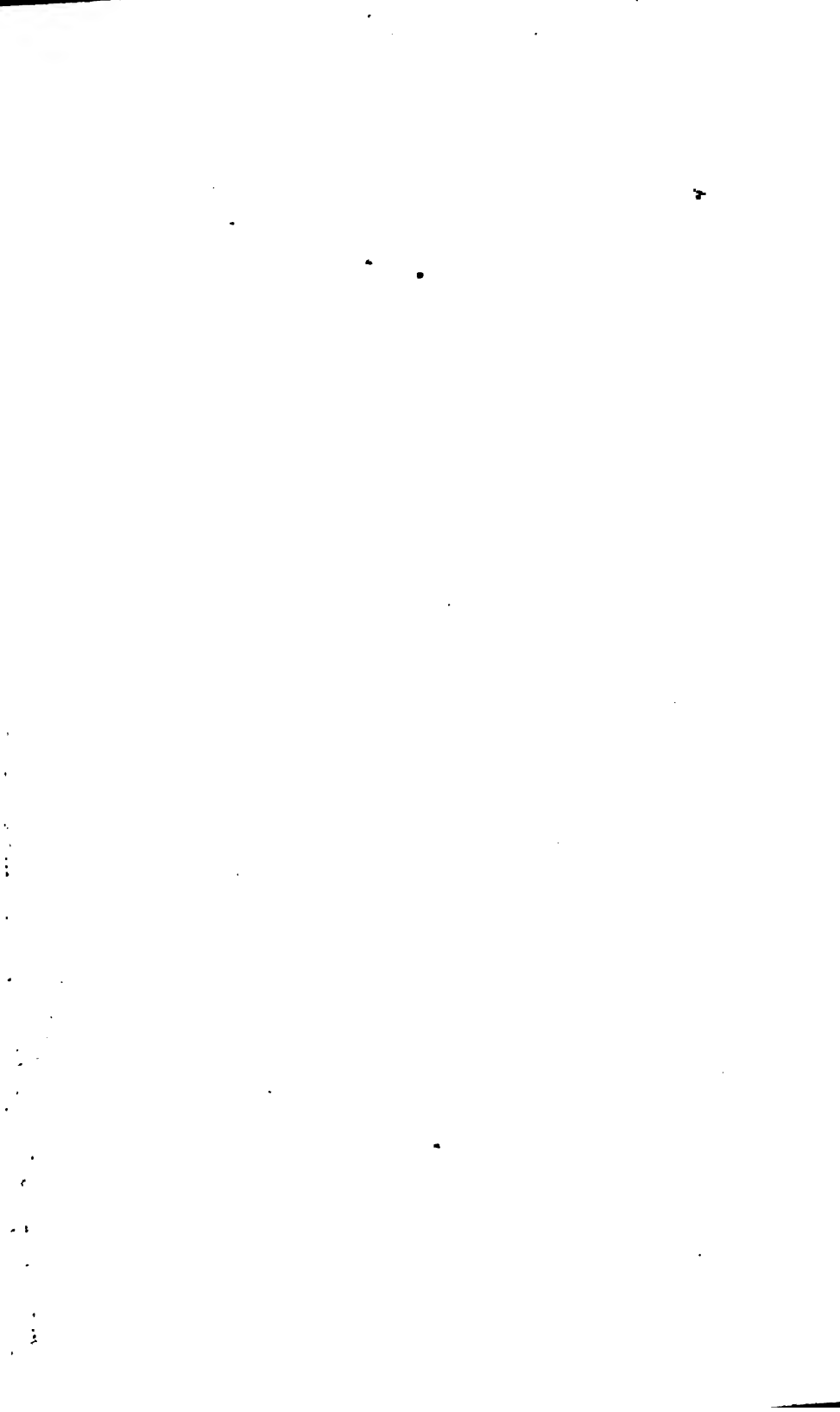
which is demonstrated in his severest justice ; yea, what mercy it is to forewarn men of the punishment of sin, that they may want no necessary means to escape it.

10. Remember how unfit the selfish interest of obstinate despisers of grace and salvation is, to be the measure or index of the goodness of God ; and how much more credible the concordant testimony of the heavenly host is, who live in the love of Love itself, and are everlastingly delighted in the praises of the infinite greatness, wisdom, and goodness of the most perfect, blessed, glorious God.











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